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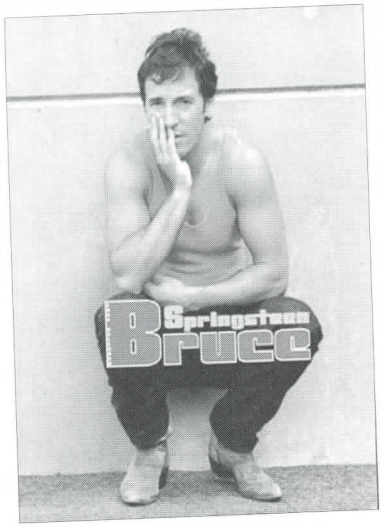

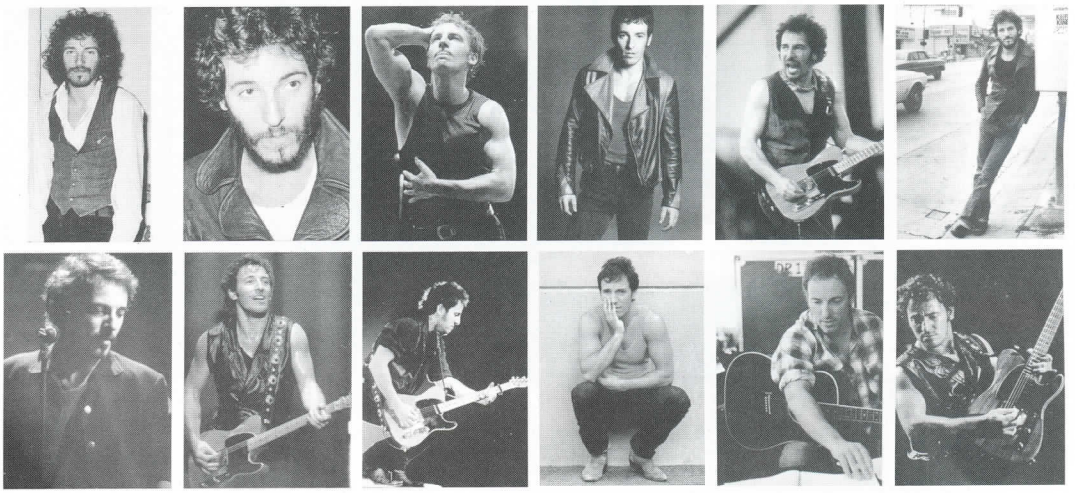

2002 CALENDARS NOW ON SALE!

The UK Bruce calendar for the year 2002 is still in stock, and now on sale! With a large shot of the Boss for every month of the year, these won't be around much longer. This is the official Springsteen calendar put out each year by Oliver Books in the UK. As always, not a lot of room to write—days of the month are listed in a row below each photo—but if you're looking for a big Boss-of-the-month for your wall the whole year through, you've come to the right place. All 12 pictured above, each calendar page is 12" x 17". Was $15, now... **$12**

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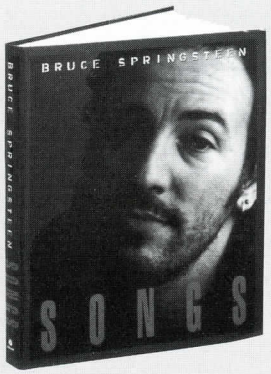

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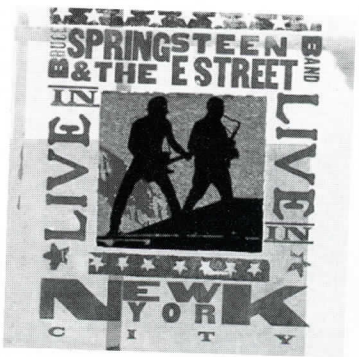

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RENÉ VAN DIEMEN PHOTO

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Backstreets

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12/3/01 Asbury Park, NJ
Photo by Mark Sullivan

OFF THE WALL

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN
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Photo by Carl J. Spataro / CJ Photography

LETTERS

Bruce's Little Helpers: Spreading holiday cheer at Convention Hall, Asbury Park, NJ, December 2001.

YESTERDAY & TODAY

Dear Editor:

For seven years through the '60s, Beatles fans looked forward to their annual Christmas message; these irreverant off-the-cuff rave-ups produced some pretty special moments and now perhaps some bittersweet memories. So when Bruce took the stage at a very warm and very sold out Asbury Convention Hall Monday evening, in what has also become a mini-tradition, there was perhaps a bittersweet and understated feel as he strapped on his acoustic, due not only to the fact that it was his first announced public appearance since 9/11, but also due to the very recent passing of ex-Beatle George Harrison. His decision to open with Harrison's classically melodic "Something," with Soozie Tyrell's fiddle beautifully contrasting the refrain, segued into "My Sweet Lord," was the perfect touch to set the tone of a show that would embrace some very worthy charities, and celebrate rock music in a season and time that could do with a little of both. I can remember my father telling me about the old rock 'n' roll shows he used to go to in NYC. At 33, I can only imagine that this is the closest I'll ever get to that.

Anne M. Freeman
via e-mail

NO MORE FAKE IDs

Dear Editor:

Just wanted to say Happy 21st to *Backstreets*. I've been a subscriber for the past eight years (almost one third of my life), and getting the new issue is always like waiting for Christmas—it can never get here too soon. It's amazing that you've been able to consistently deliver a high-quality product four times a year on a relatively limited topic, but you've never let us down yet!

Like many of your subscribers, I was lucky enough to be at the holiday show on Saturday night (December 8), and man, was I surprised to actually hear Bruce mention the magazine and the library collection on stage. Great that he actually acknowledged the work you guys put into putting the whole thing together. Congratulations on the unveiling of the collection, we're all thankful you did it.

Let's hope you're still around 21 years from now, when we'll be reading rave reviews of the new live album (the first to actually contain a complete concert), *Still Alive in New York City*. Thanks for everything, and please have a drink for me.

Chad Silver
via e-mail

BADA-BING!

Dear Editor:

Your online review of the December 8 Christmas show says that Tony Soprano was in the building. I guess you were talking about "HBO" Tony, because the *real* Tony Soprano, just up the road in Freehold, wasn't there. I know, because I'm him! I got to meet Steven Van Zandt last year and am even pictured with him on his website ("Steven meets the 'real' Tony Soprano"), but alas, couldn't get a ticket to any of the Christmas shows. Thanks for the great reviews, though. Every time Bruce mentions *The Sopranos* during his shows, it still makes me feel a little special bond.

Tony Soprano
Freehold, NJ

L.A. TIMES

Dear Editor:

I couldn't wait to recieve the fall issue when I read it would be dedicated to the 20-year anniversary of "A Night for the Vietnam Veteran." Living all my life in Los Angeles, I've seen Bruce every time he's played here—from opening for Dr. John at the Santa Monica Civic Center to being lucky enough to witness him jumping on tables at the Roxy—but I'll always remember the Vietnam Veterans show for a few reasons.

At the time I was in college and supported myself working at a recreation park in a small beach community. Strangely enough, one of the guys I worked with was into Bruce, too—in those days it wasn't like it is now where everybody wants to go to the shows. Even though Bruce sold out every time he played L.A., he was still kind of exclusive to his hardcore fans. So it was incredible to make a new friend who was into his music as much as I was.

We both went to that show with another friend and sat in the second row, on the side of the stage by Clarence. What I remember most besides losing

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my voice the next day was the area that had been reserved for the disabled veterans. They were directly in front of us, on a special platform between us and the stage, in wheelchairs and on their stomachs on gurneys.

Bruce always played to everyone in the arena, but it seemed like that night he made a special point of performing to this area, coming over and jumping on top of the monitors. I can still see the smiles, hear the shouts, and see the fists raised by the guys on the platform. It was an incredible show, all right, but more importantly it was the first time an artist took the time to say thank you and honor these brave men and women who served in Vietnam.

Bill Consolo
El Segundo, CA

GOTTA GO SEE THE BOSS

Dear Editor:

Great issue on the VVA and Bruce's contribution to its survival at a difficult time. I was glad to hear that Bruce and Bobby Muller are still in touch after all these years. From 1982 to 1984, I worked at the VVA Legal Services office while in law school, representing Vietnam Vets before the VA administration. I was one of about 20 law students in the public interest clinic, working pro bono for the veterans. During the course of my time at the clinic, I picked up a poster for the concert that was laying around the offices, I suppose. This poster, rolled up with a rubber band, was tucked into an old trunk with my daughter's baby clothes (she was born in March of '81) and I didn't see it until a recent move to California. I got the poster framed, and it now resides in my hall bathroom (called "The Boss"). I want to mount the pages of the current issue and add them to the wall.

Linnette Garber
via e-mail

BLIND FAITH

Dear Editor:

Thanks as ever for the powerful coverage of recent events in New York and beyond, which managed to be both thoughtful and emotionally honest at the same time.

I'm writing as someone who felt as much anguish and grief for the victims of the World Trade Center as the many thousands of men, women, and children all around the world who lose their lives every day thanks to the combined might of injustice and oppression. As far as I can see, it's government of all kinds that is usually behind such oppression, be that government corporate-controlled or fundamentalist. I also don't consider myself to be anti-American, more pro-people and justice—and I am very frightened by the "anti-terrorist" internment and other repressive measures which the U.K. government is bringing in as part of its own "war on terrorism." So it's not just "a U.S. thing."

In the past, many of my friends over here have recoiled from the public image of Springsteen as a bawling advocate of the glory of all things American, whereas what I see is someone who is moved by suffering wherever it is found, and who rejects "blind faith" in leaders or anything else for that matter. After all, why would he dig into his pockets for the U.K. miners during their strike back in the '80s for decent lives and livelihoods? Unfortunately, some of your readers seem determined to recast Springsteen's music as being of comfort and solace only to Americans struck down by grief, and not a force for positive change and social justice. While alarm bells do go off for me when I see the stars-and-stripes-draped artwork for the *Tribute to Heroes* benefit CD, to which Springsteen has contributed "My City of Ruin," I refuse to see him as quietly accepting the poisonous worldview of George W. Bush. So for me the cover of "War" sits very comfortably in his output (contrary to a recent correspondent's view), especially when played alongside more recent ruminations on cracks in the American dream like "American Skin," or even that endlessly misunderstood howl at the way our leaders' wars scar ordinary lives, "Born in the U.S.A."

Your superb coverage of the Vietnam Veterans benefit seems to back me up, because as far as I can see, the current U.S. administration seems determined to draw a veil over past foreign policy nightmares—of which Viet-

Continued page 38

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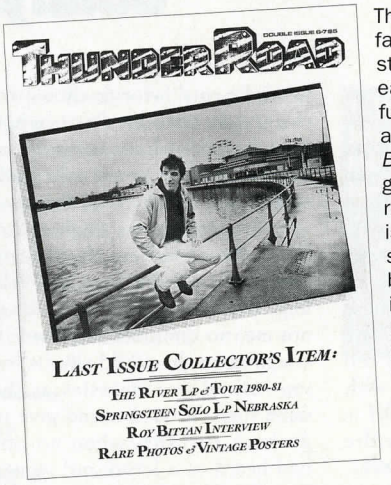
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RARE PHOTOS & VINTAGE POSTERS

The first Springsteen fanzine, *Thunder Road,* stopped publishing in the early '80s after only a handful of issues, but they were an inspiration to *Backstreets* and remain great collectibles and great reads, too. This double issue was the magazine's swan song and probably its best. *Thunder Road* #6/7 is a huge 64-page issue packed with solid writing and beautiful photos. We've scored the very last stack of these and can offer them at a lower price than we've seen before, but when they're gone, that's it. Especially at this price, it's a must have.

FINAL ISSUE OF THUNDER ROAD, #6/7.....$10

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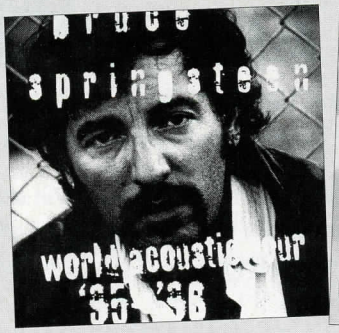

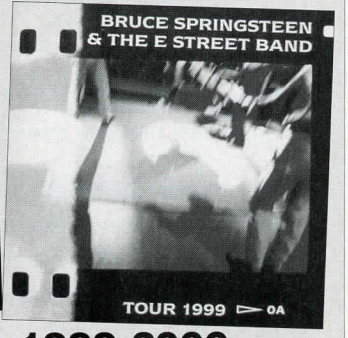

TOM JOAD TOURBOOK

The official tourbook for the World Acoustic Tour, the *Tom Joad* tourbook is a beautiful 32-page book, very colorful and packed with photos (including many shots of Bruce only found in this book), plus song lyrics, an interview and more. **$20**

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BACKSTREET RECORDS

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Between what's flesh and what's fantasy

Candy's Room

By Stacie Tobin

There are few things that are more enjoyable than being a woman at a Springsteen concert. Really, every time I have the experience I look around and think to myself: what the hell are all these *guys* doing here? "It's for the music," I know they would tell me, and it's hard to disagree with that. The music, of course, is what draws people in, is the foundation of Bruce's success, and will be his legacy.

But for us women (and undoubtedly a few men out there), it's not just about the music. There's this other, not-so-insignificant force that brings us back, show after show after show: sex.

Not that we get to have it with him, obviously. That privilege is reserved, depending on who you listen to, for a redhead that most of us women think is woefully inadequate to merit such fortune but inexplicably is there, flaunting that she has what we want. I won't lie: my favorite shows are the shows without Patti, when she's home with an ear-ache or plantar wart or some other ailment that means that Bruce—visually, anyway—is single again. The shows when there's no mouth-to-mouth duet, no "My Girl" serenade to someone who is not me, no reminder that there is a woman in the world who is living *both* of my fantasies at the same time. What I would give to go back to 1983, when no one had heard of a Jersey girl named Patti Scialfa, when Bruce was his buffest, single self, and when it actually seemed like one of us could meet him in a bar and sparks would fly on E Street, so to speak.

Unfortunately, that time has come and gone—as did a starlet named Julianne, thankfully—and I'm left with a married-for-good Bruce. I remind myself sometimes that a married-for-good Bruce is still better than no Bruce at all. There's the music, of course; but this column isn't about music, it's about sex. What's good about having Bruce, even a taken one, is that we get to go to shows and be in the presence of a bona fide sex symbol, who got to be a sex symbol not by plastic surgery, fancy clothes or a Hollywood attitude, but by being a real guy with a shared passion. Whenever I get to be in the same room with him, I think: this is the mold that all men should be cut from. You can have your Tom Cruise and your Brad Pitt, they're just pretty boys. Give me a man with a true passion for what he does, real compassion for his world, and a pelvic thrust that makes me blush every time.

The fact that Bruce exists despite the clamor for people like Ricky Martin is the best thing about him. There are lots of great musicians out there (Ricky Martin not included), and sadly, we've never heard of most of them. Many of them aren't great men, though, and we got the full deal when we picked Bruce as our hero (or as our fantasy, however you want to call it).

When I go to Bruce shows, I listen to the music. But I also watch the man and am reminded that the ideal is real, and that some sex symbols aren't just fluff and good marketing. In a world that has more than its share of shitty people, Bruce rose to the top by being good. Well, by being good and by putting his rear end on the cover of an album. But the rear end would never have been the shot bought 'round the world had he not been good, too. I take pleasure in that, and in knowing that some of that goodness must be rubbing off on the men and women in the room. If we all come out of a show exhilarated by the awesomeness of the music and inspired to be just a little bit more like the creator, we'll all be sexier for it. After all, what could be sexier than a guy who loves his job, loves his town, and loves his kids?

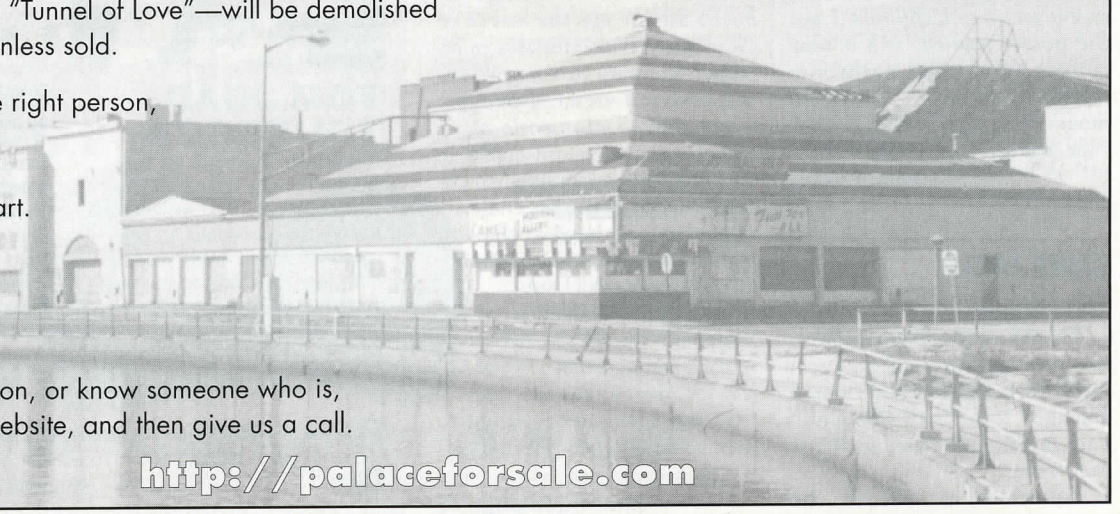
And his wife. Damn.

ARE YOU THE ONE?

Asbury Park's oceanfront is poised, at long last, to come alive with 3,000 housing units, a half-million square feet of retail and entertainment space, and reconstruction of the Boardwalk.

What about the music places? The Stone Pony will stay, if it can make a profit. The Casino, Madam Marie's, and the Fast Lane face uncertain futures. And the Palace—featured in "4th of July, Asbury Park (Sandy)," "Born to Run," and "Tunnel of Love"—will be demolished within six months unless sold.

In the hands of the right person, the Palace can be the cornerstone of Asbury's new start.



If you are that person, or know someone who is, please go to this website, and then give us a call.

http://palaceforsale.com

THE NEWS

A peachy start

Atlanta Recording Service

By Christopher Phillips

Jody Denberg, of Austin radio station KGSR, was at the Four Seasons in Atlanta, GA, when he bumped into three men in the hotel bar. He asked what they were up to, and their reply was: "just three middle-aged guys looking for a party." Which wouldn't be news any night of the week—unless, of course, those three middle-aged guys happened to be Bruce Springsteen, Roy Bittan, and Max Weinberg.

Springsteen and the E Street Band were in Atlanta for studio sessions in late January, working on what is shaping up as Springsteen's first album of new rock material in ten years, since the simultaneous 1992 release of *Human Touch* and *Lucky Town*. It's been even longer since Springsteen has brought a new producer on board, but the Southern Tracks studio sessions featured Brendan O'Brien in the booth.

O'Brien is probably most noted for his work with Pearl Jam and Stone Temple Pilots. Any such change will be seen as positive by some fans, hoping for fresh creative input in Springsteen's studio process, but O'Brien's track record bodes particularly well. (Especially after the *L.A. Times* quoted producer Glen Ballard—too close to Alanis Morissette for comfort—as "working on a Bruce Springsteen song" in November.) While the choice of O'Brien is in keeping with reports of a harder-edged rock sound for the E Street sessions, the producer has worked with a variety of artists including Bob Dylan, Train, Neil Young, Rage Against the Machine, Pete Droge, Paul Westerberg, Billy Joe Shaver, Michael Penn, Maria McKee, and Matthew Sweet. Sweet called him "one of the most talented people, both as a producer and as a musician, that I've worked with."

Following the holiday shows, Springsteen reportedly spent a good deal of time writing in December, and he was in Atlanta intermittently in January. At the end of the month, E Street Band members convened there for a concentrated long weekend of recording.

While the sessions themselves were shrouded in typical secrecy, several sources confirm that Springsteen came prepared with brand new material and that the weekend was a success. One source close to the band told *Backstreets*, "They're blown away. 'Where does he *get* this stuff?' And these are people who have worked with him for 25 years."

> ***"Last week in Atlanta, we got together—it was supposed to be a big secret, but it's all over every web site there was. So this is the first step..."***
> ***—Nils Lofgren***

On February 1, Nils Lofgren talked on the air with ESPN radio's Tony Kornheiser about progress so far: "At the end of the last tour and many times in recent interviews, with Bob Costas or others, Bruce has indicated... his commitment to rededicate himself and the band to the fans, and have another chapter, which involves a record and eventually a tour. Last week, in Atlanta, we got together—I mean, it was supposed to be a big secret, but it's all over every web site there was. There were 'spies' in the parking lot when we were down there, from Italy! So anyway, this is the first step of what would have to be many. And you know, I love Bruce and I hope he takes all those steps and—in a year or so, whatever, on his timetable—does that."

Springsteen himself has been keeping quiet, but an interview with Bill Flanagan (for VH1's *Homecoming: Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band*, which premiered December 16) gave the most recent glimpse of his state of mind: "I'd like to make a record with the band, have something that I can go out and play on the road. We'll see where it goes. We've played a little bit in the studio.... I'm just starting to get into what that's going to pan out as. I think I'd like to play again live like that not too far in the future if everything goes all right."

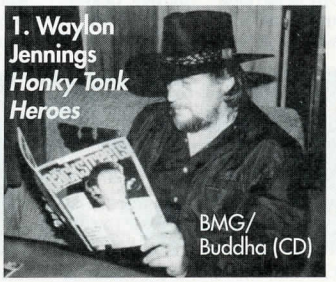
A February 7 *Billboard* story reports that "as many as five songs [have] been put to tape." Though Bruce's timetable, as Lofgren points out, is his own, all signs point to a concerted effort toward his stated goal of a new E Street album and tour, and soon. In any event, the Atlanta sessions seem to have brought a great leap in the right direction.

While no new song titles have yet emerged from Southern Tracks studios, one new Bruce song was reported in conjunction with another artist's new effort. Springsteen wrote "I'll Stand by You Always" for his son, and offered it to labelmate Marc Anthony for his second English-language album.

Anthony told *Billboard*, "Isn't that an honor? I thought it was very, very generous of him. And I think it's the ultimate compliment, when someone like that thinks you're worthy of singing a song he wrote for his son."

While the song was planned for release on Anthony's new album, he reportedly made several attempts at the song without a satisfactory version; the album has been delayed and the Springsteen song dropped from consideration. Whether "I'll Stand by You Always" will be reclaimed by its author or become another "lost" song on Springsteen's shelf remains to be seen.

the backstreets jukebox



JERRY FLOYD PHOTO

2. The White Stripes
White Blood Cells
Sympathy for the Record Industry (CD)

3. Shannon McNally
Jukebox Sparrows
Capitol (CD)

4. Fugazi
The Argument
Dischord (CD)

5. Graziano Romani
Soul Crusader: The Songs of Bruce Springsteen
Freedom Rain (CD)

6. Wilco
Yankee Hotel Foxtrot
wilcoworld.net (download)

7. Jay-Z
The Blueprint
Uni/Def Jam (CD)

8. Patty Griffin
1000 Kisses
ATO (advance CD)

9. Maria McKee
You Gotta Sin to Get Saved
Geffen (CD)

10. Tenacious D
Tenacious D
Sony/Epic (CD)

10 Monster Discs to Play Today and Everyday

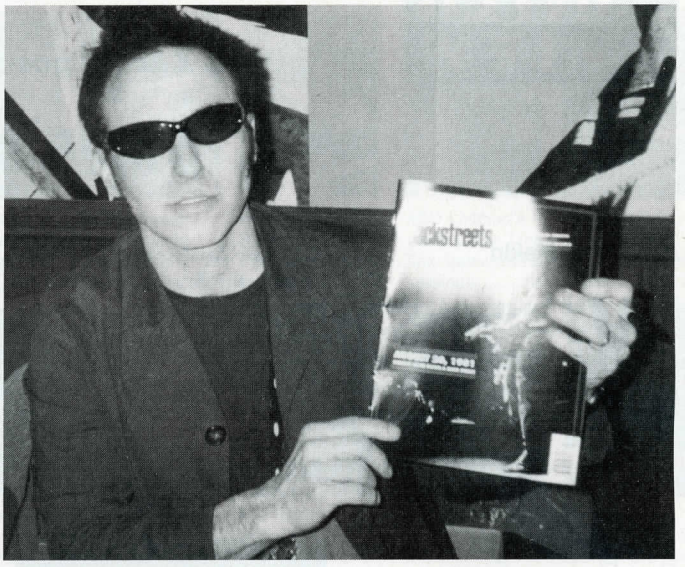
ON LIPS

MAMMA MIA!

From Thunder Road to the Great White Way? The songs of Bruce Springsteen are taking the stage in a different fashion, with a rock opera in the works based on his music. *Drive All Night* shapes Springsteen songs into a narrative about a working class guy named Eddie. The new work was conceived by Darrel Larson (artistic director of the Culture Project in New York City) and Stephanie Kerly Schwartz. After two years of work and three weeks of rehearsal, the rock opera will have its first reading in March—with approval from Springsteen, who will see it then for the first time. Hey, it worked for ABBA. . . . Down in St. Petersburg, Florida, local bands celebrated Springsteen's music in their own way with Central Avenue Freezeout: A Tribute to the Boss. The January 18 State Theatre concert, organized by Greg Norris (AKA Lucious P. Slugworth) featured bands like Hangtown, the Fiction Dogs, and the Black Honkeys paying tribute "not only to the music, but the message.". . . Melissa Etheridge carried the music and the message to Madison Square Garden, for the Concert for New York City; though Bruce didn't make it to the concert himself, she performed an acoustic "Thunder Road," since released on a 2-CD document of the benefit. . . . Mary Lou Lord covers "Thunder Road," Boston subway-busker style on *Live City Sounds*. . . MCA Nashville's reissue of Steve Earle's classic *Guitar Town* makes a great record even better with the addition of Earle's live "State Trooper.". . . Hank Williams III's take on "Atlantic City" appears on his latest, *Lovesick Broke & Driftin'*. . . . Howie Beck's *Maybe I Belong* has his version of "I Wish I Were Blind.". . . That song has also been covered by Kevin Montgomery, on his *Another Long Story* album. In the wake of 9/11, Montgomery added another Springsteen cover to his repertoire, performing "No Surrender" in his live set. . . . Fans of Irish-influenced music should check out Portland, Oregon's Casey Neill Trio. Neill, a *Backstreets* subscriber, tells us, "I record for the Boss-friendly Appleseed label and have a track on their Seeger tribute CD. My new live CD *[Portland West]* on Appleseed has a version of 'I'm on Fire' on it medleyed with an Irish reel.". . . The latest album from Jubliant Sykes, a contemporary Christian artist, appears to be a bid for mainstream pop crossover, including a cover of "If I Should Fall Behind.". . . *Backstreets* fave Patty Griffin is finally out of record-label limbo, with *1000 Kisses* set for release this spring on ATO Records. "Stolen Car" is slated as track three. After reading our interview with Griffin in issue #72, *Backstreets* reader Jon Hensley wrote in to say, "I also was at the Birchmere show that night, and her version of 'Stolen Car' was one of the best concert moments I have ever experienced. What an incredible voice with a perfect approach to the song." Griffin's *1000 Kisses* hits on April 9—don't miss it.

FRIENDS OF MINE

Nils Lofgren, guesting on ESPN radio's *The Tony Kornheiser Show* on February 1, caught the ear of many a Bruce fan with news from the Atlanta recording sessions. But don't forget the reason he was on in the first place: *Tuff Stuff: The Best of the All-Madden Team Band*, is the second album from Lofgren in recent months. *Tuff Stuff* features music Nils composed for the All-Madden Show, including two unreleased songs. Even better is *Breakaway Angel*, his first studio album in over six years. Both are available at www.nilslofgren.com for online ordering, and *Breakaway Angel* is set to hit stores in mid-March . . . Joining John Lennon, Al Green, Joe Cocker and others on a new Capitol Records benefit CD is Robbin Thompson, Springsteen's bandmate way back in the Steel Mill days. After his stint with Bruce in Steel Mill, Robbin pursued a solo career, and he continues to release music in addition to running his recording studio, In Your Ear (www.lobe.com), in Virginia. Robbin contributed a new song called "Wouldn't Wanna Be You" to the new compilation, titled *United We Stand*, with profits going to the American Red Cross. . . . Bill Toms, a longtime Houserocker with Joe Grushecky, has his own band and a new CD. The latest from Bill Toms & Hard Rain is *This Old World*, on Schoolhouse Records. Check out www.billtoms.com, or visit Premiere CDs in Pittsburgh, (412) 481-3641. . . . Clarence Clemons fans have had something to look forward to ever since his Labor Day 2001 stand at the Pony; those shows were recorded for a live album with Toby Scott at the helm. But C.C. is taking his time, as he told *Sound & Vision*'s Jamie Scorcher when she asked if he had a release date: "No—and isn't that wonderful? I don't have anybody breathing down my neck saying I have to get this thing done. I'd like to have it out by Christmas, but I'm in no big rush." Hard to imagine *anybody* breathing down the Big Man's neck.

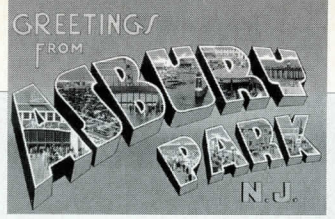


CURTIS CLELAND PHOTO

Nils stops releasing albums just long enough to check out Backstreets.

JOHNNY 70

He's been everywhere, man, and he'll have 70 years under his belt (a black one, no doubt) on February 26. Yep, it's Johnny Cash's 70th birthday, and this year will see several tributes to the Man in Black. Sony Nashville has an album of Cash covers due on May 28, with Springsteen contributing "Give My Love to Rose." Other artists taking part are Dwight Yoakam, Little Richard, Steve Earle, Sheryl Crow, Emmylou Harris, and Travis Tritt. . . . Springsteen gets honors of his own from several recent men's magazines. In their sixth annual poll, GQ readers picked Springsteen as Man of the Year in the "Music: Solo Artist" category. *Maxim* named Bruce as one of the top 50 Americans (#41, actually—and scientifically determined, to be sure). Why? "Made it OK for non-Republicans to wave the flag. Unlike most 'artists,' actually works for a living during four-hour concert marathons." Flag-waver (or at least flag-stander-in-fronter) General George Patton topped the list. . . . Wanamassa-based visual artist Kelly Sullivan is helping local causes with an acrylic painting of the famed carousel that once had a home on the Asbury boardwalk. During Springsteen's recent benefit concerts at Convention Hall, Sullivan had Southside Johnny Lyon, Nils Lofgren, Bon Jovi keyboardist David Bryan and hundreds of Asbury Park music fans add to the painting-in-progress at the Pony. The artwork was then auctioned online on behalf of the Alliance of Neighbors—it was purchased for $3,175 by Dave and Sandy Wilson of Woodbridge, NJ—with prints also being sold to further benefit the Alliance and the Save the Pony Campaign. So far she's raised an additional $1,400, and prints are still for sale at the Stone Pony or at their website, www.stoneponyonline.com. . . . Ted Demme, co-director of the "Streets of Philadelphia" video with his uncle Jonathan, collapsed during a celebrity basketball game on January 13 and died shortly thereafter. Demme was also producer of "Yo! MTV Raps" and director of films such as "Beautiful Girls" and the recent "Blow." He was 38, and will be missed.



Asbury landmarks in trouble

Developmentally Challenged

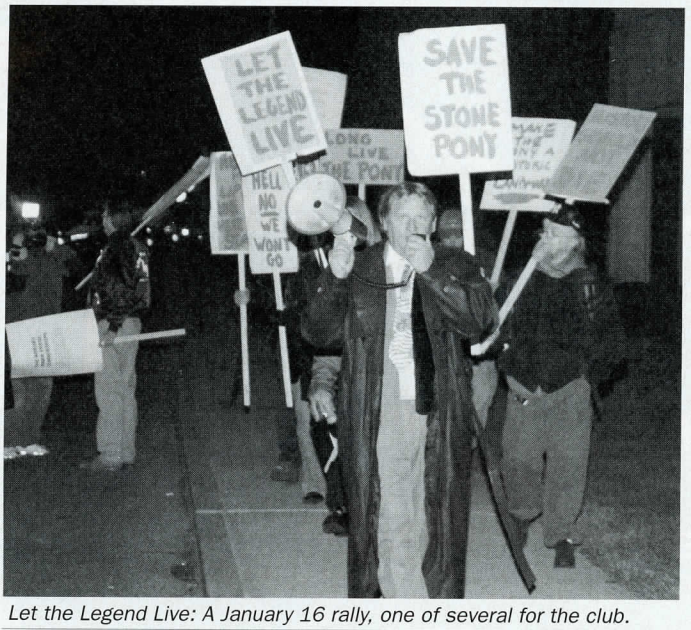
By Robert Makin

With the redevelopment of Asbury Park finally more than just a dream, defenders of the city's musical heritage have had to keep their guard up. But their vigilance is paying off. Protest concerts, petitions, and rallies by supporters of the legendary Stone Pony nightclub—news of which quickly spread to national news outlets like *The Wall Street Journal* and NPR's *All Things Considered*—have given the club a new lease on life after a waterfront planner had slated it for demolition.

Spearheaded by veteran Asbury rocker Tony Amato of Boccigalupe & the Badboys, the Save the Stone Pony campaign obtained thousands of signatures that were introduced at city council meetings. The Stone Pony also seems to have the support of Andres Duany, a consultant hired to help the city and its new waterfront developer plan the redevelopment of downtown. Duany advised City Council members that the 28-year-old nightclub should stay where it is and be surrounded by apartments that could be marketed to people who would enjoy close proximity to concerts.

"Basically, what he's saying is that if we didn't have a Stone Pony, we'd have to invent it to bring people in," Councilwoman Kate Mellina told the *Asbury Park Press*. "He has managed to convince the developer that not only would people want to live near the Stone Pony, but that they'd pay more to be part of the complex."

Duany, of Miami-based planning and architectural firm Duany Plater-Zyberk & Co., endorsed developer Ocean Front Acquisitions' plan for 3,000 housing units—some new, some refurbished—on the waterfront. He also recommended that preservation-minded activists who want to save the Palace Amusements building be given six months to find a buyer for the 114-year-old structure and its Tillie mural.



Let the Legend Live: A January 16 rally, one of several for the club.

Bob Crane, chairman of Save Tillie (www.savetillie.com), a non-profit organization of volunteers who want the L-shaped building spared, said his group would help the city and developer find a buyer, but that Duany's recommendation to demolish the part of the building that faces Wesley Lake was off-base.

"That's not for the city or the developer to decide," Crane told the *Asbury Park Press*. "This building is on the National Register of Historic Places."

At press time, the redevelopment plan still needed to be approved by the City Planning Board and the City Council before it is adopted. "The details have yet to be worked out, so we have to keep our eyes on the situation," the Save the Stone Pony website reports. "But we know that your support helped make this proposal possible." You can still sign the petition at www.savethestonepony.com.

Amato adds, "We still need to show that the club is bringing people into town and that it is a viable business and that people are still supporting the club." The Pony had a victory party on February 24 with longtime house band Cats on a Smooth Surface, which in its early days included Glen Burtnik, Bobby Bandiera and Fran Smith of the Hooters. Also playing the Pony in February were Gary U.S. Bonds and the Danny Federici Band.

Steve Van Zandt, who formed Southside Johnny & the Asbury Jukes as the club's first house band, responded to the situation with the following statement: "Like Convention Hall, the Berkeley Carteret Hotel, and the boardwalk, the Stone Pony has become an institution of Asbury Park. It has an important place in history and is a great source of pride for the state of New Jersey as well as being an international tourist attraction. Leave it where it is."

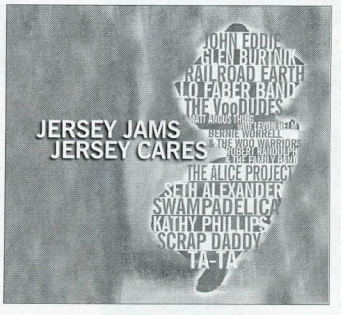
Jersey Jams, Jersey Cares

More than a dozen of New Jersey's top music acts are banding together to pay tribute to the hundreds of Garden State residents lost in the September 11 terrorist attacks. *Jersey Jams, Jersey Cares*, an all-star compilation CD, will benefit their families and serve as a source of healing and hope. Set for release on March 11, *Jersey Jams, Jersey Cares* features Bernie Worrell & the WOO Warriors, Robert Randolph, Matt Angus Thing with Levon Helm of The Band, John Eddie and Styx member Glen Burtnik, among others.

The all-volunteer grassroots non-profit charity effort is being organized by the Jersey Jams Fund (www.jerseyjamsfund.org), a small band of music scene movers and shakers who will donate profits from the disc and several benefit concerts to Bergen County's United Way (www.bergenunitedway.org), one of the only non-profit organizations in the state distributing funds to all New Jersey families who lost loved ones in the attacks. Bergen County's United Way graciously agreed to be the project's fiduciary.

Twenty percent of all monies raised by the compilation and concert series will be earmarked for music scholarship for the families, not only for college, but also for private lessons, school band equipment and travel expenses to festivals, competitions and auditions.

Benefit CD release concerts for the project will be March 10 at the Stone Pony in Asbury Park, March 14 at The Old Bay in New Brunswick, March 15 at



Crossroads in Garwood, and March 24 at the Stanhope House in Stanhope.

If you're interested in contributing to or sponsoring Jersey Jams, Jersey Cares, please e-mail sjalexander@worldnet.att.net or makinclan@aol.com, or call (908) 322-7744 or (732) 390-7995.

JOHN CAVANAUGH PHOTO

Backstreets Back Issues

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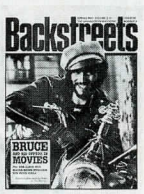
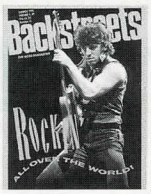
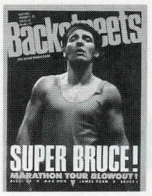


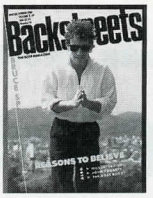
#9 Bruce in the movies; Beaver Brown; Boss books.....$8



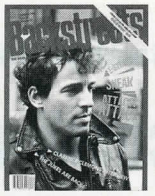
#14 Rockin' the world: tour '85; Boss club; R.E.M. interview.....$5



#15 Super Bruce! '85 tour; Sun City; Mad Dog interview.....$5



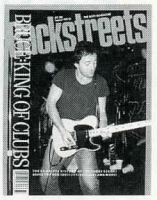
#16 Bruce's political message; N. Lofgren; John Fogerty.....$5



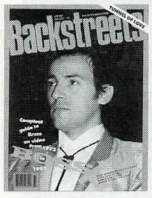
#17 E Street Sneak Attack; Clarence int.; Boom Carter...$5

#18 Boss Top 10; Bonds int.; Robbin Thompson; studio sessions.....$5

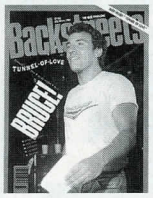
#20 Listener's guide to the *Live* box; more studio sessions.....$5



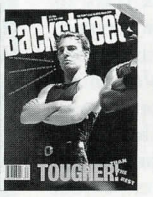
#21 King of Clubs: Shore music; Steve int.; Landau int.....$5



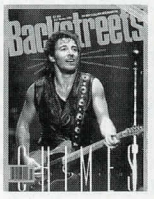
#22 Guide to Boss video; Bruce's Fender; The Upstage...$5



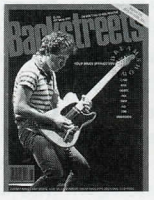
#23 *Tunnel of Love* reviews; John Hammond; Stone Pony.....$5



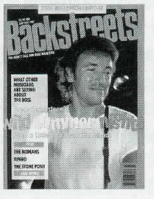
#26 Complete European tour set lists/reviews; Freehold.....$5



#27 Amnesty tour coverage and set lists; Southside int...$5

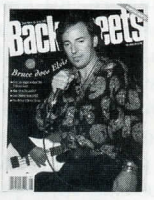


#28 Fans pick dream shows; *Esquire* article coverage.....$5

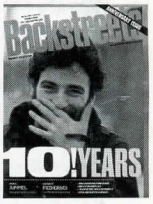


#30 NJ Club Tour '89; others talk about Bruce; Steel Mill.....$5

#31 Bruce's '78 birthday interview; E Street breakup; Shore guitar.....$5



#32 "Viva Las Vegas"; lost photos, backstage passes.....$5



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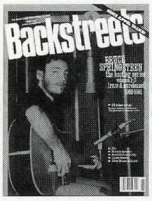
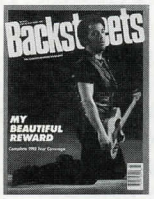
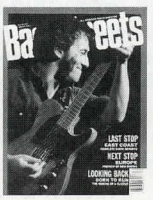


#36 Bruce box: *The Bootleg Series*; Appel int. part two.....$5

#38 Interviews: Max, Southside Johnny, Little Steven.....$5

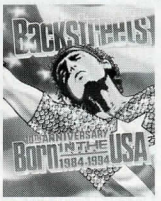


#41 U.S. Tour '92: Cleveland through Dallas.....$5

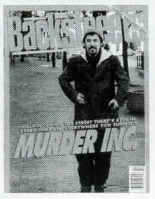


#42 Tour '92: St. Louis through Lexington; Bruce inducts CCR....$5

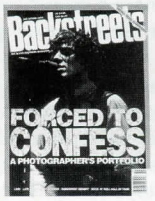
#45 '94 Boss; Bruce's Beautiful Award; "Streets of Philly".....$5



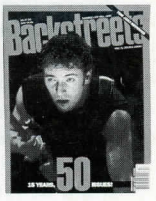
#47 *BUSA* 10 yr. retrospective; lost Murder Inc. LP; SSJ int.....$5



#48 *Greatest Hits;* Bruce Springstone; trivia quiz.....$5



#49 Trivia quiz answers; photo portfolio; Sony Studios; more..$5



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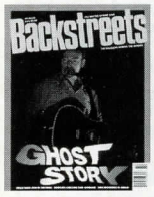
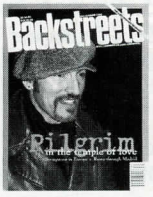


#52 *Joad* tour coverage begins, New Brunswick to Dublin.....$5



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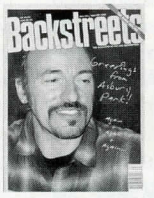

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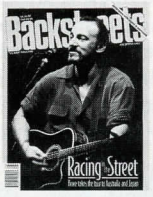

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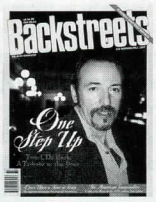

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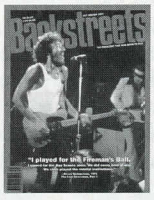

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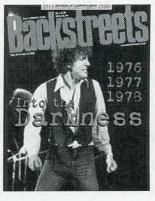

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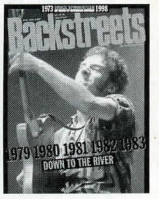

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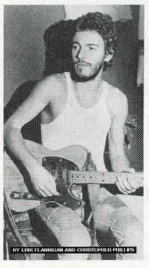

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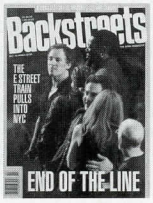

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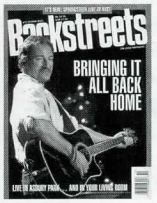

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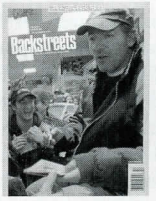

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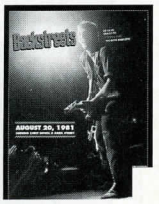

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INTERVIEW

Van Zandt goes "Underground"

Steve's Garage

By Robert Makin

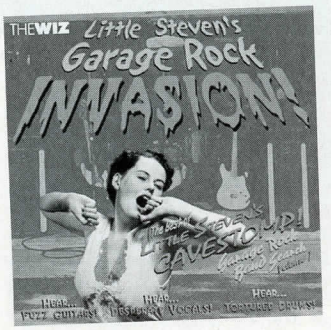
With his refound celebrity after the E Street Band reunion tour and the success of *The Sopranos*, Little Steven Van Zandt has been revving his star power to push the burgeoning garage rock scene. Rooted in such deliciously innocent '60s bands as the Strawberry Alarm Clock and 13th Floor Elevators, the '60s sound is close to Steve's heart. In 2000, Van Zandt became involved in Cavestomp, a garage rock festival held at punk-oriented clubs in New York. That evolved into a 16-week showcase pairing up-and-coming bands with such garage rock pioneers as Music Machine, the Electric Prunes, and Creation.

Initially the host of the series, Van Zandt got The Wiz electronic stores to sponsor Cavestomp and a band contest. A new compilation CD, *Little Steven's Cavestomp Garage Rock Band Search: Volume I* (The Wiz, $8.98), features 20 of the best entries, including winners the Priests from Rochester, NY. In typical Little Steven fashion, proceeds from the CD will be donated to the Robin Hood Relief Fund.

Van Zandt, who hails from Middletown, NJ, was in a '60s garage band called the Source when he met Springsteen in the Freehold-based Castiles and Danny Federici, the E Street Band's Flemington-raised keyboardist, in an Asbury Park band called the Motifs.

The vocalist/guitarist has his own latter-day garage band called the Lost Boys, for which Van Zandt says he has "no plans until someone makes me an offer I can't refuse." But he will be busy with his own syndicated radio show that will air starting April 7 on classic rock stations throughout the country, including Q104.3-FM in New York, called "Little Steven's Underground Garage."

"It will be what I call classic garage rock from 1966, '67, and '68," Van Zandt says. "It will also include the British Invasion stuff that it came from—like the Beatles, the Stones, the Who, the Kinks, and the Yardbirds—right through the New York Dolls and the Ramones from the '70s, the Fuzztones and Chesterfield Kings of the '80s, and I'll throw in a few new bands every week."



What makes you happiest about the Cavestomp concert series and compilation?

The fact that so many young bands are listening to and being influenced by the '60s. We booked over 50 new bands by the end of 2001 and had over 600 entries in the contest. I also very much enjoy seeing the legendary bands playing alongside the new ones. Sean Bonniwell and Ron Edgar of Music Machine, the Electric Prunes, and Creation all reunited specifically because of our encouragement.

The Wiz made a nice commitment to Cavestomp. No place like The Wiz?

The Wiz's involvement in Cavestomp was amazing. Not only did they sponsor our 16 shows this year, they also took the unprecedented step of putting a "garage rock" section in all 40 of their stores. It's the first time most of the bands got distribution at a major retailer.

What is it about both the garage scene and today's current popular music landscape that made you want to get so involved in Cavestomp?

I don't relate to what's going on generally in the mainstream. I'll hear a song here or there I like but, as far as I'm concerned, we're drowning in a sea of mediocrity. Every decade since the '60s gets more and more diluted. Our standards keep dropping, and now everyone seems to have accepted having one or two decent songs on an album. So basically, I got involved for selfish reasons. I'm promoting the only music that I really like.

You were in garage bands as a kid.

We were all garage bands then. My band was called the Source. The other big groups in the area were the Mods, the Motifs, the Clique, and the Castiles.

And you've got a garage band of your own now called the Lost Boys. Tell me about their lineup, sound and plans.

I'm going to leave the lineup a mystery for now. The sound is mid-'60s. It's garage-y, but more rootsy than classic garage. More 1965 than '66 or '67. No plans until someone makes me an offer I can't refuse.

Will you continue to be involved in Cavestomp, or do you feel you've gotten it to the point where it can continue without you?

We're trying to move the Cavestomp concept to a national stage. I've been working on a garage rock radio show for a year, before I even got involved with Cavestomp. It's finally coming together. We're also working on a TV show and a documentary film. Everything was a go before September 11. Now we'll have to see.

Tell me more about the radio show, "Little Steven's Underground Garage."

We have some terrific local shows like Bill Kelly on 'FMU on Sunday afternoon and Arnie Pritchett Monday nights on 'NYU. I won't be as eclectic or obscure as their stuff, because I'm trying to reintroduce the regular classic-rock type of audience to things that don't get played often enough. Mainstream garage, really. Mostly familiar things. Across the country now classic rock stations are eliminating the '60s, playing less and less every year. Q104 is the exception, but for most of them the '70s is as far back as they like to go.

•For more information about Cavestomp, visit www.cavestomp.com
•For more on Steve and Underground Garage, visit www.littlesteven.com

Bruce gives Steven the "Spotlight"

Always a wearer of many hats (and scarves), Steve Van Zandt has been a political activist for over two decades in addition to his numerous other projects. He was recently honored for his efforts by the Creative Coalition, a non-profit organization of artists and entertainers dedicated to political education. The Coalition's annual Spotlight Awards Gala was held on November 12 at Sotheby's in NYC, and Bruce Springsteen was on hand to present the Spotlight Award to his old friend. With the Max Weinberg 7 providing the entertainment and many of Steve's fellow *Sopranos* cast members in the assembled crowd, it was a Jersey kind of night.

In his remarks, Springsteen likened Little Steven's first solo album to "Phil Spector in a head-on collision with Noam Chomsky on Highway 61." He also praised Steve's combination of rock 'n' roll and social activism, "where art was more than ideas. He walked it like he talked it. He put his money—maybe a little of mine—where his mouth was."

Accepting the Spotlight Award, Steve recalled his trip to Europe on the *River* tour as a catalyst: "I came to politics late in life. I had a tunnel vision you wouldn't believe. But around 1980 when I knew we had made it, the tunnel started to fade. I wanted to know what was going on."

DANNY FEDERICI

DANNY CLINCH PHOTO / COURTESY OF DANNY FEDERICI

THE BACKSTREETS INTERVIEW

Danny Federici has been a key player–pardon the pun–in Bruce Springsteen's music for over thirty years, beginning with Steel Mill-precursor Child in 1969. Now based in California, the organ and accordion player has been concentrating on his own instrumental music, both live and in the studio, when not on active E Street duty. Fresh from an East Coast jaunt for the Asbury Park holiday shows, Federici talked to *Backstreets* about his new CD release on Hip-O/Universal, the rededicated E Street Band, and holidays by the sea.

BY CHRISTOPHER PHILLIPS

Well, it was a joyous week in Asbury Park. I know we were having a good time in the audience, and it sure looked like you guys were having a good time on stage.

You know, I had friends come in from California to see the shows. The president of my record company flew out, and he called me and said, "I felt like I was 17—like I was back, riding around, at the shore, it was just incredible!" So I guess the whole feeling of those days was just relived a little bit. A little bit of youth, feeling good, Christmas time... and that's great.

Besides the five nights of holiday shows, you were already coming east for some publicity signings and did *Late Night with Conan O'Brien* while you were at it.

Yeah, I like to go back to New Jersey and feel like a star! *[laughs]* I did four signings—three Borders and one Sam Goody. It was really nice to have people come up and talk about all the great music that Bruce, the band and me have done over the years. You know, there could have been five people, but that made your day.

Max is, you know, a good friend of mine, and I talked to him a couple weeks before about going on the show with the band. I had done *Conan* a couple of times before, and I wanted to go on with the band to establish my presence as a bandleader. So a couple days went by, and Max calls me up and he says, "I just spoke to Conan—if you want to come on the show, why don't you take the red-eye out here on Thursday, and we'll get you Friday night." It was fabulous. I loved doing that—it's such a rush. To go by yourself and put yourself out there. It's like jumping into cold water: even if you can't swim, you've gotta swim!

So that was Friday, and when did holiday show rehearsals start?

Sunday. The first show was Monday, we rehearsed Sunday. So I stayed in the city Friday night, went down to Jersey on Saturday and checked in, and then Sunday we had a rehearsal over at Convention Hall. It was really pretty easy, because Max's band, they've got everything all wired. Y'know, Jimmy [Vivino] writes all the charts—he knows everything that's ever been played in any of Bruce's songs. We rehearsed 30 songs before the day was over, we were there from noon until 7 or 8 at night. I went through a couple of accordion songs, we did some Little Steven stuff....

Steve was there at the rehearsal, wasn't he?

Yes. We rehearsed one of his songs with the accordion, and a few others that I don't know—because I wasn't up there all the time. Which is really nice about these Christmas shows: I just go up and play a couple songs, everybody shares the time. Otherwise it'd be crazy, you'd have 50 people on stage. And you know, I sit back there just like people in the audience and listen to the music and listen to what Bruce has to say, and laugh along with everybody else.

Obviously, one of the most fun things was all the old material that came back after so many years, like "Thundercrack," and "Seaside Bar Song." It's been more than three years since *Tracks,* let alone how long it's been since those songs were played live. And then there was "Wild Billy's Circus Story," which was a real treat to hear with a band again. I imagine the setting had a lot to do with it, but any idea why these songs made an appearance again after so long?

I don't really know what he thought, or how he came up with the idea. It seemed to me like he wanted to do something special just for Asbury Park—like playing "Rosalita" all the time. But who knows what lurks behind that mind of his. Oh, "Circus Song"—I screwed that song up so bad. At rehearsal, Garry's out there with the tuba, and I'm out there—and now this song is *old!*—and he goes, "one, two, three, four...." And he's looking at me, and I'm looking at him, and it's like, "Well?..." Apparently, I start the song! So then I went back and I listened to it on CD, and I said, "Yeah, yeah, yeah, okay." And then the part of the song when I come in and I bellow shake the accordion—I completely forgot, I completely didn't do it. I looked at Bruce at the end and just sort of raised my eyebrows... But that's rare, that's very rare that you forget *anything*—it's sort of welded in your mind.

If something is embedded in your mind like that—I think of a song like "Lost in the Flood" from the last tour as well—it probably helps if you *don't* think about it too much.

No, you can't. What's amazing is when we do songs where our hands go to chords that we haven't played in a while, and it's like automatic pilot. You go there, and you climb up chord structures, and you're like, "Holy mackerel, I don't even remember this song, but my hands are going there." It's incredible. I've seen Steven do stuff—well, he hasn't been around for so many years, you know; we'd be at rehearsal and his hands would do that thing, and his mouth would open, like, "I can't believe my hands are going here."

It's got to be fun to be playing that old stuff again. Any favorites stand out from the holiday shows?

What's nice about it is you can put a whole new slant on it. You know the basics, so you can really work around it. I had fun with "Kitty's Back." The first night we played it I had such a good time doing it, the second night I decide to be "Mr. Jazzman" and I completely lost myself in the solo. I didn't look at anybody, I was just was in some other place. Before I know it, I'm hearing the horn parts starting to come back in—because I think Bruce was like, "Hey, we gotta stop this guy!" I talked to him later, and he goes "That was a hell of a solo tonight!" I was like, "Thank God you stopped me when you did, I'd still be playing it!"

What was it like to play these old E Street Band songs again, some for the first time in 25 years, but not actually be playing them with the E Street Band?

I think it's not as strong—but then again, we played with those horn players off and on for many years, so I love those guys. I used to sit right in front of them, which was even better than on the side of them And if you ever need anything to get you going, just look over at those guys, they're jumpng around, moving... So it's not really *that* different. But I did miss Roy.

Scott [Healy], Max's keyboard player, did take a lot of the parts in those songs.

He sure did, boy—many times when I'd come in and somebody was up there, like Garland, rehearsing in the afternoon, and I'd see Scott playing these parts and learning them all—and I hid out. Because it was great—go Scott! It's great! It was nice to not have to work so hard. Scott did a great job... poor guy!

Speaking of Garland, you played with him in the studio some years back, didn't you?

Oh yeah, I hadn't seen Garland in so long. We did that record [1981's *Escape Artist]* when I was going through this period where I was doing a lot of studio work: I did Garland Jeffreys, Joan Armatrading *[Me, Myself, I]*... everybody was at the Record Plant at the time, and I was hopping from one studio to the other. I was figuring I could be a studio musician, so I did three records in one week. He's one of those people that, no time has passed when you see him—oh man, he's such a good guy. I was hoping he was going to be there, and then I saw his name, and the feeling was mutual. It's been a long time.

There were so many guests this time around— you had Garland, Elvis Costello...

Yeah, Elvis is a nice guy—it's funny, I didn't even recognize him. You can sort of tell when somebody is walking around, like, "Are you somebody? Or..." So then I introduced myself, "Elvis, I gotta apologize, I didn't know who you were. But I'm Danny, I'm the organ player in the band." He goes, "Ah, that's okay." *[laughs]* And then Hornsby, of course, is a card.

How did "You Sexy Thing" come about?

Who the hell knows—it was fun, though. Out of left field, I'll tell you. And with the accordion, to boot! My biggest concern with Hornsby was that he was going to break my accordion!

Oh, was that your accordion? I was wondering why you didn't come down and have an accordion duel with him!

I think that would have caused more problems than it was worth. Because he's so big! I brought a small-sized accordion because it would be light on stage. Those are acoustic things—only so much air can pass through them at a particular time—and I just know he's stronger than I am. But it survived, it survived.

And his history—we sat in the dressing room talking with Garry [Tallent], and Hornsby is a real aficionado as far as records go, and who did what, when. So is Garry. So when two of those guys get together... talking older, blues and New Orleans-type stuff, different types of influences on different records. You know how they analyze that stuff.

Well, let's talk about your own record. *Danny Federici,* which just came out this fall, is a revamping of your first solo record, *Flemington*—with a new title, new cover art, and a

A ten-year-old Danny, at his first accordion gig with proud Mom, Jean. (Dad took the photo).

PHOTO COURTESY OF DANNY FEDERICI

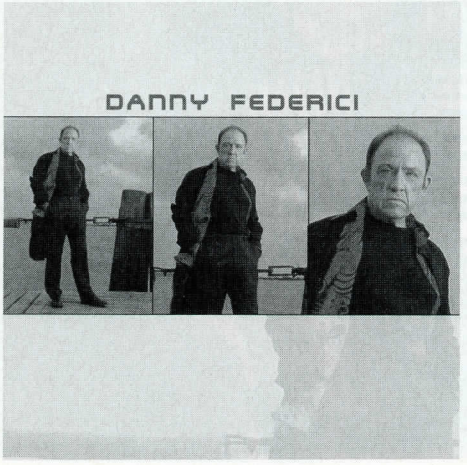
new track, "Erica." How did the reissue come about?

In all the interviews I do, I say right up front, listen, this is the reissue—because people say, "Wait a minute, this is just like the last record!" What happened was, I became friends with Bruce Resnikoff, the head of Universal Music, during the last tour, and I was telling him I had this record that didn't really do anything. Nobody got a chance to hear it, and I had signed with a record company who basically didn't take advantage of some of the things that I guess they could have—I was out on tour, I could have done some in-stores, and it could have been publicized a little more. I said, basically, it's just sitting on my shelf, and I let him hear it. He felt that it was worthy of putting back out.

Universal was kind enough to let us put another song on the record— which was really interesting, because we're at this label called Hip-O, they do a lot of reissues. After we got there, Michael Cates and I—my producer and co-writer on "Erica"—said, "let's put on another song, make it a little special." They said "great," and they went along with changing the cover, too—so it's funny, they got themselves kind of a new release for a label that's famous for reissues. Michael and I went into the studio and did "Erica," and then we had the whole thing remastered at Sony. So the record actually has a better sound to it, too.

It sounds like you and Michael Cates have a good collaboration going.

Michael's been really, really helpful. He's a jazz artist, a saxaphonist, a producer, and also an engineer. I work better, I think, with a partner. When you lose a little inspiration you've always got somebody. I've been looking for one for a long time, and Michael and I just seemed to jel really well. He's originally from New Jersey, and he has alot of the same qualities that I have. He e-mailed me some years ago that he was playing at the Newport Jazz Festival, so I got in my car and drove down there and we hooked up. We just started talking, and writing, and playing a little bit together. He's one of the few people that I've really allowed to tell me what to do. You know, in a producer's sense—"You're playing too much, you're playing too little, it sounds wonderful but could you do it again." I love the way he plays sax. His jazz feelings on a lot of things and a lot of ideas really complement my music. When you're in a down time or when you just can't come up with ideas, he'll be calling me and going: "Hey, we should do this!" or "What do you think about that?"



I'm glad to see that the album is getting better distribution this time around. I remember in '97 when *Flemington* came out, there was a lot of interest, but people couldn't find it. So the new label should make a big difference.

Especially in Europe. This record was never released in Europe, and I'm just closing the paperwork on it right now for European distribution through Universal. For all intents and purposes, its a brand new record there. What's a drag about this is that the artists are the ones that look bad when a record doesn't sell, and its like, "Oh yeah, that's right, he had that thing out and it flopped."

What made you decide to change the album title? When the original *Flemington* release came out, you talked to *Backstreets* about going back to your old hometown and how difficult that was just as far as figuring out who you were, and who you should be. It seemed like there were a lot of identity questions going around in your head when you were making the record, and the title seemed to have some real significance for you. So I guess I'm wondering if the title change came from being in a different place, or having resolved some of that.

Absolutely, it did. There were a lot of things that changed in my life. I was divorced last year, I live by myself, there's a whole lot of things. The album is a brighter color. Its not as dark anymore. I'm sort of on a new path here. I'm single now. *[laughs]* Single again! "Looking for... women with their own jobs, their own money... a house would be nice...." *[laughs]*

I had many good years, and I got two wonderful children out of that situation. I don't regret any of it for a second, because I love my children to death. I held on as long as I did because of them. You plan your life a lot differently, you look out for your future a little bit better than you did before. You don't do crazy things; you want to be around for a while. It's really quite sobering, I've got to tell you.

Does it inspire you artistically as well?

Oh, yeah. Especially because I have my children 50 percent of the time, and they come over and jump on my piano all the time. I'm trying to show them a little bit of music, so they get me playing on days that I wouldn't normally be playing piano.

Listening to the new edition of the record I was reminded that both Nils Lofgren and Garry Tallent helped out on it. What was it like working with them on your own terms?

I sent Garry the tape, and he played on it ["In the Next Five Minutes," "Round and Round"] and sent it back to me. Nils was actually in town, because he used to be the band leader for the Cable Ace Awards. I have my studio in a little pool house— I said, "You gotta come over here and play on the record." Every time I hear him on that record ["A Doorman's Life," "Mingle-Mangle"] I just love it. I mean, that's like one or two takes he did on those songs. He just plugged it in—I had a little amplifier in the laundry room—and he is such a "feeling" player. He knew exactly what to play. And it's really tricky, too, because I'm not a guitarist. So me putting guitars on my stuff, it's very difficult because I really don't know what they would play. I don't have a sense about the instrument. I just figured, well, there's a big hole here, let's take a shot and see what it sounds like—and it was perfect. Both those guys are great.

It must be something to be playing together on a regular basis again. When we talked about the reunion tour last time, we asked you what stood out as far as your own performance. How about what stood out for you as far as your fellow bandmembers?

I really have to say, I was impressed with Max. I guess you get a little bit better when you play every night of the week for the last nine years. I think Max's playing made the band a lot stronger and harder and tighter. And we've never been as powerful since we had three guitars in the band for the first time.

But you know, everybody went out and did different things, and we actually learned—we got more tasteful. That's usually what happens: you start slowing down a little bit, and you choose your notes more carefully. I think each person became a classier player. When you've got that many people on stage and you're able to not get in other people's way—even some of the instruments you can't hear—you're going a lot on feel. Bruce has a way about him where he can orchestrate people's performances, and egos don't come into it.

But then, of course, you'd still get to step out with the accordion and have those moments in the spotlight.

Oh, it's my ax, I loved it. It's so great. I play that thing in my sleep. I've been playing that since I was seven years old. My mother used to pull me around by my ear and make me play that darn thing.

I thought Nils was terrific as well, just to watch him do his thing. He goes to another place when he plays. He's on my side of the stage, so I'm just looking down, and I'm enjoying it like the audience.

And having Nils on the pedal steel....

He learned how to play that thing on tour! It was unbelievable. I have to say, Patti was a nice touch, too, having a female influence. The girl is great. There were a couple shows that she didn't make, and sometimes you don't realize what you've got until it's gone. She was home for some parent-teacher thing, and then she came back—and she was a nice rounding thing, it was really cool.

I'd been wondering what was it like to be back on the road again at this point in your life. Clearly, if a bandmember is missing a show for a "parent-teacher thing," times have definitely changed—how different was it really from the earlier days?

Oh God, I loved it. It was great. I miss the hotels and the room service and the traveling. What was really wild was that I had my whole family with me. I took my two daughters and my ex, and we went everywhere. The tour was based around family. I would go to work and come back. On my days off we'd go to the zoo or museums in different countries. It was so wild "going to work," and then coming back to your family. It's a whole lot different than throwing keys out to the first couple rows! *[laughs]*

Did your kids come to the shows too? Were they wearing those protective headphones on the side of the stage?

Oh yeah, I don't know if you saw them, the two little

girls on the right-hand side. They're gorgeous little girls. We've got a whole big thing we set up backstage for them to play and do things together. They get along pretty good. They had an extended family. I didn't even tell them I was going back east this month because they'd be upset about it. They want to see Uncle Bruce, and Clarence—they know everybody.

I assume you've seen the *Live in New York City* DVD?

I did. I sat here with a friend of mine last week, and normally I wouldn't watch it. He's a big fan, and he came over; I have a big TV and stereo with surround sound, and we turned it on, and he got me to sit down and we watched the thing. I gotta tell you, it was pretty great. I feel like an audience member, I really do. It's tiring, it sounds great, it's energizing, it's really fantastic. His said that it was fun watching me enjoy watching myself. It was a lot of laughs, people jumping around and watching Bruce do some of his silly stuff, like I'm in the audience.

Did you ever have the chance to see a show from that perspective before?

Yeah, once I did. I went to the show in Los Angeles when Bruce had put his ['92-93] backup band together. It was funny because Bruce called me up and asked me to come to the show: "We'd love to have ya, come on down." I said, "There's only one way I'll come down, it's if I play." Bruce was kind of indecisive. We left it open. So I hung up the phone and eventually heard from somebody who sent me some tickets and passes to get to the show. But I hadn't heard anything about playing, and I really wanted to find out about what I was going to do. I hadn't heard anything, so I didn't go to the show. Bruce calls me up on a Sunday and goes, "Hey, man, what's going on? You weren't at the show." I said, "Well, you never called me back—you didn't tell me if I was playing."

He said, "Did I ask you if you'd come on down and play with the band?" I said, "No, but I'd love that—that's a great idea, I'll come down tonight!" So I went down and sat in with the band, and I remember walking into the audience down one of the aisles while Bruce was onstage with the band and watching him perform. It was pretty wild. I got up onstage, and we played a couple songs, and the bass player [Tommy Sims] turned around and said, "It sounds like you've played these songs before." So, funny things happen.

You also played a few non-E Street shows with Bruce on the *Tom Joad* tour, like in Asbury Park.

I did that one, and I did another one in Santa Barbara which was really fun. I got a chance to give Kevin Buell a hard time, because he played a couple of keyboard parts from offstage, and apparently he was real nervous about the fact that I was going to be there. He had numbers on the keys so he would know what to play first, second, third, you know. I told him he was taking my work away from me. I heard later he was upset, I had to call him back up and say, "Hey, I'm just messin' around! I'm pulling your leg here, man."

My understanding is you and Michael Cates have another record in the works, in addition to the *Danny Federici* reissue.

We're real close. We have a lot of material. I built a studio in Orange County, and these studios today are extremely powerful and really small. It doesn't take any space at all, and it's all digital. It gives you the freedom to spend hours and hours just working on ideas and recording stuff.

FAR LEFT: PAM FRANCIS PHOTO; LEFT: JEAN FEDERICI PHOTO / PHOTOS COURTESY OF DANNY FEDERICI

ABOVE: ***Danny with Erica—"the inspiration for the new track. This should have been on the cover," laughs Danny. "That's what sells records!"***

RIGHT: ***Danny at 15, playing the Elks Lodge in his hometown for a charity event.***

You've also mentioned that you were working on a Christmas album, too—are you shooting for Christmas 2002 with that?

Yeah. When I first went to Universal, I played them three or four accordion Christmas ideas. You'd be surprised—you know, a sort of jazz-influenced/accordion Christmas-music album—how cool it is. It's really different and upbeat. Universal really loved that idea.

Do you have any sense of how a rededicated E Street Band will affect your plans?

We're definitely rededicated. So, I really don't know. We've talked about doing more songs, going and doing a record, and we started some of that [in the spring of 2001].

What was the band working on at the time?

We had done a couple of different versions of some of the songs we'd already done for like a radio mix, just experimenting on a couple of things that had already been done.

Was that for "American Skin"?

That's right, actually. I had heard that they wanted to remix it and do it a different kind of way. So right now I don't know where it stands.

In Bruce's interview with VH1 that aired last week, he mentioned that he'd done some demos of new songs from end of the last tour—like "Code of Silence," "Further on Up the Road"—and that he wanted to do some more recording and get back out on the road. Any indication of E Street plans for 2002? Having had most of the band back together in Asbury, do you have any sense of that yet?

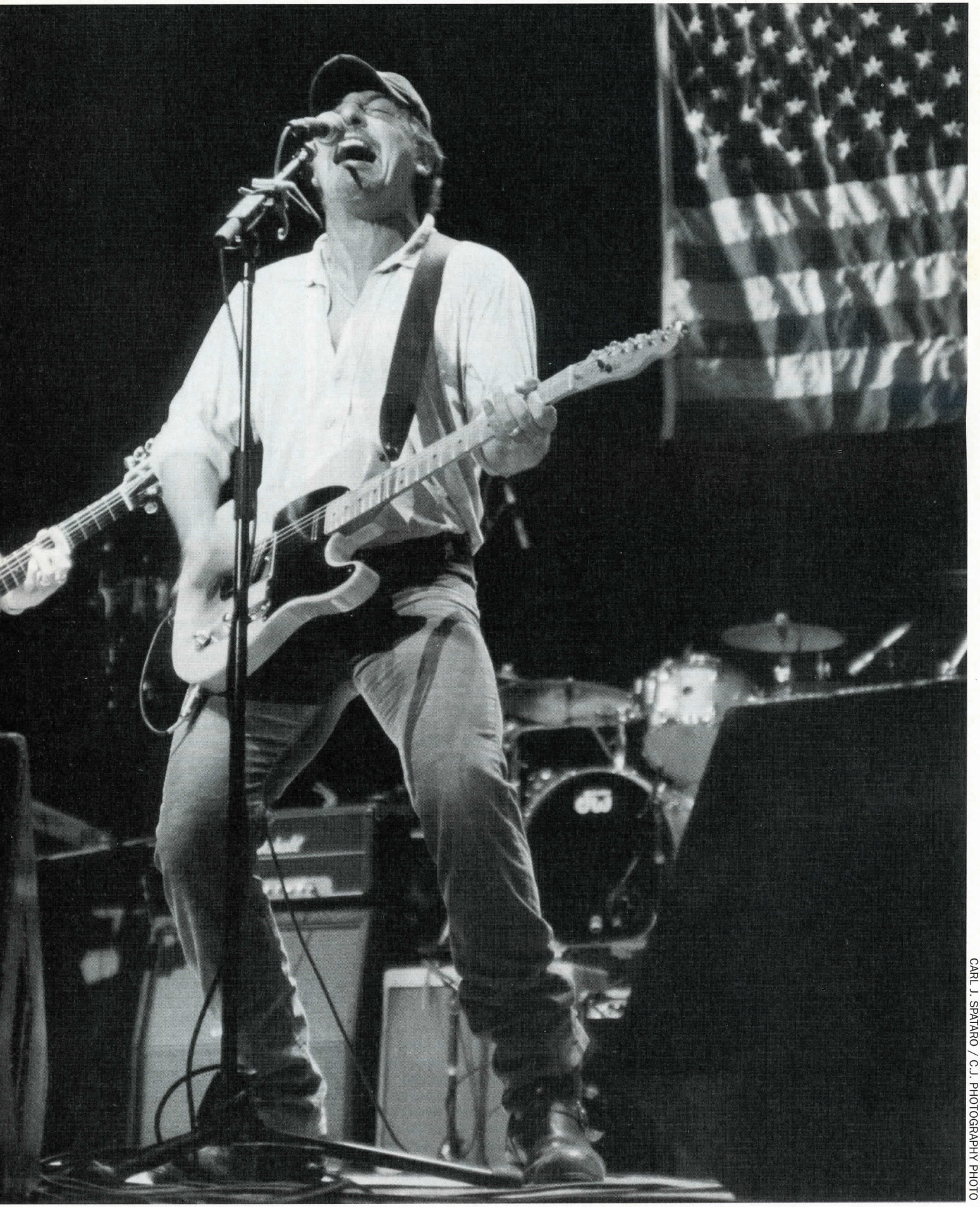
No, I really don't. It was just really nice to see everyone—and then the whole band wasn't there, so it wasn't like we could have a pow-wow. I really didn't get any sense about anything. I always get the sense that Bruce really loves what he does, and if that's the case he'll want to do more. I saw the VH1 interview—and I was just as inspired by it as you are. I was like, hey, that's pretty good! So I really know as much as you do.

How difficult is it to balance what you want to do yourself with being an E Street Band member? Was the last tour inspiring for you?

The tour was definitely inspirational, having the band back together and going out and doing what we did without a record. I thought the way the band broke up was really crappy. I thought it left a sour taste in everybody's mouth; we really didn't know what happened, if we were "fired," or "let go"—any of those words are not good. They don't sound nice. It was just because Bruce wanted to try other things. We never really disbanded, we were always there for one another. I think by the band coming back together and proving we still had an audience who cared about everyone added a level of confidence again to the members of the band. It certainly helped everyone's careers. People sort of said, "Yeah, I remember those guys, what they do is valid."

And not only valid, but I think the general consensus was that you guys never sounded better.

Yeah, isn't that great? You usually don't hear that kind of thing. Usually it's, "they remember the songs, and they're doing all right," but never "they're better than they were." We all had such a great experience being together—being older, and being wiser—that when you have something going that makes you feel so good, you just don't want it to stop.



CARL J. SPATARO / C.J. PHOTOGRAPHY PHOTO

FRINGE BENEFITS

IT WOULD HAVE MADE SENSE TO MOST. Madison Square Garden. Six weeks after September 11. Televised live to so many people looking for some meaning, for community, and for a rockin' good time. An amazing collection of musicians, actors, and the real heroes from that tragic day, New York City's finest and bravest gathered at the request of Paul McCartney. The perfect time and venue for a man and his band to bring it all together and bring it all back home.

Taking a pass on two high-profile benefit shows, Bruce Springsteen finds a simpler approach to raising funds and lifting the spirits of those touched by tragedy.

But it didn't happen. From the stage that night, Melissa Etheridge played "Thunder Road," explaining that "the man himself couldn't be here to play this." For whatever reason, Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band took a pass on this highest-of-profile events. But one thing is certain, Springsteen was, in fact, already giving much of himself—from performing "My City of Ruin" at the September 21 telethon, to his participation in the Alliance of Neighbors of Monmouth County benefit shows on the two days preceding McCartney's MSG concert, to other more subtle and private ways of helping out and paying tribute. On October 5, a memorial service was held for World Trade Center victim Jim Berger in Yardley, Pennsylvania. Near the end of the service, a video that Springsteen had sent to the family was shared with other attending mourners. Addressing Berger's three sons Springsteen said, "I understand this was one of your Pop's favorite songs," before playing an acoustic "Thunder Road." Gestures like this spoke volumes to a more personal approach that Springsteen seemed to adopt post 9/11.

It was an approach that stood in stark contrast to another benefit show, organized by Michael Jackson, called—incredibly—"What More Can I Give?" Initial radio promotions included Bruce's name, but they were ambiguous enough to seem more like "wishful thinking" than "guaranteed appearance." It was a most-blessed no-show. That concert, held at RFK stadium in Washington, DC, was filmed and then televised on ABC on a later date—one that just happened to coincide with the release of Jackson's new CD. Ugh. During the live show, rapper P. Diddy sampled Springsteen's "Born in the U.S.A.," trying to get those flags a-wavin'. Misunderstood even in his absence, Springsteen's *presence*—on more intimate stages the past few months—brought some much needed comfort, joy and relief to friends and neighbors alike.

—Andrew E. Massimino

dateline: 10/18/01 & 10/19/01
ALLIANCE OF NEIGHBORS CONCERTS

Both Nights: TIGER ROSE (with Sonny Burgess) • ALL JUST TO GET TO YOU (with Joe Ely) • LIGHT OF DAY (with Joan Jett) • BOBBY JEAN • MY CITY OF RUIN • LAND OF HOPE AND DREAMS • THUNDER ROAD (with Patti Scialfa) • STAND BY ME (ensemble finale)
Count Basie Theatre, Red Bank, NJ

With all eyes focused on the October 20 "Concert for New York City" at Madison Square Garden, a much smaller event took place at the 1,400-seat Count Basie Theatre in Red Bank, NJ, on October 18 and 19. In fact, the original dates for these Alliance of Neighbors of Monmouth County benefit concerts were October 19 and 20, but the show on the 20th was moved to the 18th in deference to the larger event in New York. The two New Jersey concerts specifically benefited the families of World Trade Center attack victims from Monmouth County. Ticket prices ranged from $50 to $500, and many were sold through charity auctions for significantly higher amounts. The concerts raised around $1 million.

The lineup of musicians for the Alliance of Neighbors shows guaranteed a fast sellout of tickets regardless of the cost. With Bruce Springsteen and Jon Bon Jovi heading the list of performers, the small concerts suddenly became a big event, albeit one that would be attended by a relatively small number of people. The rest of the lineup featured former members of Elvis Presley's backup bands, Jerry Scheff, DJ Fontana, Sonny Burgess and Kevin Kennedy—sometimes known as the Sun Rhythm Section—as well as Aztec Two Step, the Smithereens, John Eddie, Highway 9, Henry Gross, Randy Moore, Borialis, Felix Cavaliere, Joe Ely, Joan Jett, Phoebe Snow and the Pilgrim Baptist Church Celestial Choir. Garry Tallent served as Music Director.

As a bonus, a 3 p.m. rehearsal performance was opened to the public on the day of the first show. Those tickets were available for $25 at select locations in the community, like the high school and the library. The idea behind the afternoon performance was to allow young children from the victim's families to see the stars of the show. Appropriately, the front orchestra section of the theater was reserved for them at the otherwise general admission performance.

The structure of the rehearsal show offered absolutely no hint of what was to come in the evening with regard to Springsteen's contribution. With such a large list of performers announced, it was clear that Bruce would not be the main focus of the concerts. Several of the scheduled bands did a couple of songs, and Bruce played solo-acoustic versions of "Bobby Jean" and "Thunder Road" with some vocal help from Patti Scialfa. Bon Jovi skipped the afternoon per-

formance, disappointing many of the very young fans, but they warmly received Bruce, who gave a brief, yet emotional performance. He posed for photos and signed autographs for the victim's families afterward.

At the evening performance, the crowd's anticipation of a night of Bon Jovi and Springsteen hits was quickly dashed. It was a long and slowly paced show, and Bruce's portions of it were spread throughout in small doses. But the small doses were special. He joined the Sun Records contingent for a duet with Sonny Burgess on "Tiger Rose," a Springsteen composition that Burgess recorded in 1996. What seemed like hours later, Bruce emerged again to join Joe Ely on "All Just to Get to You," a song that he had recorded with Ely in 1995 for Ely's *Letter to Laredo* album. Then he was gone again, only to return later for another inspired duet, this time with Joan Jett on "Light of Day." Since that song has become a staple of Bruce's live performances, it's worth mentioning that Jett recorded it first, back in 1987.

Eventually the long night drew closer to a finale and Springsteen finally emerged for his own set. He was introduced by New Jersey filmmaker Kevin Smith (Smith stepped in at the last minute as a substitute for scheduled host Dennis Miller). With a thrown-together and under-rehearsed band—which thankfully included Max Weinberg on drums and Garry Tallent on bass—Bruce kicked off his set with "Bobby Jean." The Pilgrim Baptist Church Celestial Choir then joined in for a beautiful interpretation of "My City of Ruin" and "Land of Hope and Dreams." "Thunder Road" followed and by anyone's kindest assessment was a bit of a mess. (Roy Bittan was sorely missed.)

Continuing with the under-rehearsed nature of the festivities, the entire group of performers was enticed back onto the stage by Bruce for the finale, Ben E. King's "Stand by Me." But most of them seemed surprised by this, and hardly any of the singers knew the words to the song—kudos to ex-Rascal Felix Cavaliere for gamely trying to organize the many singers as this was happening. At some points the audience was singing the correct lyrics and the performers were not. Bruce picked up on this and turned his microphone to the crowd.

Of course it's difficult to be critical of an event with such important charitable intentions, but there was some talk afterward about getting the show whipped into shape for the second night, especially since it was to be telecast live on a local cable channel. And in what came as no surprise to those in attendance for both shows, the second night brought a much tighter and musically stronger show. The set list—at least as far as Bruce was concerned—was identical to the first show. It would seem that on the afternoon of the second show an actual rehearsal without an audience took place.

The Alliance of Neighbors remains an ongoing charitable organization and intends to remain active in the community. Information about the organization and upcoming events can be found on the internet at www.allianceofneighbors.org.

Robert S. Bader

CARL J. SPATARO / C.J. PHOTOGRAPHY PHOTOS

The gang's all here for the encores.

Above: Things got to get better, with Joan Jett (l.) and Joe Ely (r.)

SONNY BURGESS RUBS IT IN

By Rob Grace

Batesville, Arkansas sits about 1,130 miles from Red Bank, New Jersey. A big divide, but nothing a $200 round-trip (post-September 11 slump) air ticket out of Memphis couldn't bridge.

So, when my brother e-mailed me that Sonny Burgess, the Sun Records pioneer who lives about 25 miles down the highway from Batesville, was going to perform at a World Trade Center benefit with Bruce Springsteen in Red Bank, I was already making arrangements in my head.

I first met Sonny a few years ago at the historic King of Clubs in Swifton, Arkansas (pop. 830). The King of Clubs, for those who might not know, is a genuine Arkansas ramshackle roadhouse, permanently stuck in the 1950s. In its glory days, it played host to a batch of young rockabilly greats such as Jerry Lee Lewis, Johnny Cash, Carl Perkins, and of course, Elvis Presley. My father—a man lucky enough to be a teenage disc jockey when rock 'n' roll was still a newborn—and I made the 30-minute drive to the King of Clubs where a video crew from the Smithsonian was taping Sonny's performance.

The only things I knew about Burgess back then were that he was one of Sun Records' original artists, he had recorded a CD with Dave Alvin, and he had just appeared on a Springsteen tribute album, *One Step Up/Two Steps Back: The Songs of Bruce Springsteen,* performing a previously unreleased composition called "Tiger Rose."

At the time, the latter was all I needed to know. Springsteen was to me what Elvis was to my father.

When Sonny took the stage that night, it looked as though a bright-eyed teenager with his first guitar was stepping up to the microphone, ready to unleash something rowdy and fun. He plugged in and let loose with an abandon one usually doesn't associate with a 67-year-old man.

Over time, through my jobs at a local radio station and paper, I got to know Sonny. So, when I got word about the Red Bank benefit, I thought my brother and I could respectfully ask Mr. Burgess if he knew of any way we could get tickets to at least one of the sold-out shows. We thought we could fly to N.Y.C., and if the tribute tickets fell through, we could spend a couple of days in Manhattan, goofing off, then head home to Arkansas.

I made the call. Sonny said he would see what he could do. We left it at that.

In the next few days, though, I realized I most likely wouldn't be able to make it to the show, due in part to an obligation I had made to my family. I phoned Sonny and told him. He still had not heard anything on the tickets, so I told myself it simply wasn't meant to be.

And then, the Tuesday after the benefit, I got a phone call from Sonny.

"Hey," he said, in his always-sunny Southern tone, "you should've gone. They had a couple of backstage passes waiting on you."

At this moment, there was a slight silence on my end.

"What?" I said. Surely I had heard him wrong.

"Yeah," he said. "They came up to me before the show and asked where my two friends were, and I said, well, they couldn't make it. The lady says, 'Well, I had two backstage passes for 'em.'"

At this point I should say that, as a 34-year-old man, I don't usually weep like a baby. But if ever there was a time where I wanted to curl up into the fetal position on my office floor, it was now. Not only could I have seen Sonny Burgess and Bruce Springsteen duet; not only could I have seen a fun performance from Sonny; not only could I have seen an intimate, rousing performance from Springsteen—I could have been backstage. I could have, you know, nodded at Springsteen. And he, maybe, you know, could have nodded back.

Whew! The possibilities missed.

Back to reality, I calmly said, "Sonny, why did you tell me this? I could've gone my entire life without knowing I could have been backstage at an intimate Bruce Springsteen show."

Sonny just poured more salt into the wound.

"Yeah, it was great. Man, that guy can play. It sure was a lot of fun. You really missed out."

According to Sonny's recollection, the Burgess/Springsteen connection actually began about ten to 15 years ago. Burgess would tour the United States with the Sun Records All-Stars, a collection of performers from the heyday of Sam Phillips.

"In New York," Burgess, now 70, told me, "we'd play the Lone Star Café. Played it about 12 times one year, more than any other act. Well, one time, Max Weinberg and Garry Tallent brought their wives, and they just kept on coming."

In 1996, Tallent and Alvin came together with Burgess and helped produce the self-titled album in Nashville. As they tossed around some more songs to record, Tallent remembered an obscure piece Springsteen had written called "Tiger Rose," but the lyrics were nowhere to be found.

"So Tallent called up Springsteen," Burgess said, "and Bruce called back and recited all the lyrics into an answering machine. We transcribed 'em, Tallent taught me the song, and we recorded it."

PHOTO COURTESY OF SONNY BURGESS

Left to right: Burgess pianist Kern Kennedy, Burgess, Springsteen, Elvis Presley's former drummer D.J. Fontana

At the Red Bank dates, Springsteen and Burgess performed a duet of "Tiger Rose." It was also the first time Burgess had seen or met Springsteen.

"The man has the fire," Burgess said. "You can see it when he's up there. He really gives it his all, gives it back to the audience."

Burgess, who signed with Sun Records in 1956, should know. Not only a passionate rock 'n' roll performer, Burgess has also seen his share of rock legends firsthand. In the late '50s, he played with or opened for Roy Orbison, Johnny Cash, and Elvis Presley.

And, he experienced the taste of a number one record as well.

Sort of.

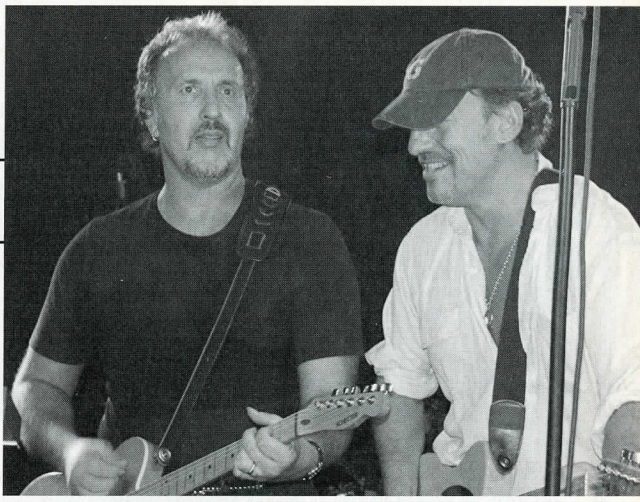
"'Red Headed Woman'," Burgess said, referring to the rockabilly standard he recorded for Sun (not the Springsteen song), "was number one in Boston. 'Course, we didn't find out about it until 40 years later, but that's all right."

Rob Grace is a columnist for Arkansas Weekly *in Batesville, AR. He's also the program director for KZLE - The Max 93One FM, a rock station based out of Batesville. He bought his first Springsteen album (the 8-track for* Born to Run) *from the late Discount Records in Little Rock when he was 11 years old.*

Springsteen twists the night away at the Light of Day benefit, 11/3/01

dateline: 11/3/01
LIGHT OF DAY BENEFIT

TALKING TO THE KING • FIRE • RAMROD • LIGHT OF DAY • TWIST AND SHOUT • LUCILLE
with Joe Grushecky & No Spring Chickens, and other guests • Tradewinds, Sea Bright, NJ



RUTH BAROHN PHOTO

When Bruce Springsteen took the stage at the Second Annual Light of Day Concert on November 3, 2001 at Tradewinds it capped off what was already a spectacular night of music. Local hero Bob Benjamin, whose birthday the event celebrated, put together a show that raised money and awareness for Parkinson's Disease while celebrating raw, three-chord rock 'n' roll.

"It felt great," said Benjamin, who was diagnosed with the disease four years ago at age 38. "It's the kind of music I love, the kind of music I work with. It's great to be together with old friends on your birthday." Benjamin's friends made the packed crowd dance and sweat until the Boss showed up to play guitar with headliner Joe Grushecky. With Bruce closing out the night, the stage soon became as packed as the floor, for an all-out Jersey jam session.

For Tony Amato, a Shore-scene veteran now fronting Boccigalupe & the Badboys, these jams are second nature. "After all these years growing up together and playing with him, you don't even have to look at each other because you have that chemistry. There are certain things that you pick up over the years that cue you as to what is coming next."

Amato's band took the stage earlier in the night after an energetic set by local rocker Danny White. Boccigalupe treated the crowd to rhythm, blues and the Asbury sound; guitarist Billy Walton made some eyes pop while doing things to his strings that would make both Stevie Ray and Jimmie Vaughan proud. Joe D'Urso & Stone Caravan played their brand of rock like an emotional kaleidoscope, down and dirty at some times, sensitive and serious at others.

Epic Records' Highway 9, formerly Samhill, came in to play their first show after recording their debut release in Nashville. The crowd was treated to Peter Scherer's sensual vocals, catchy choruses and bare-to-the-bone instrumentation. Highway 9 guitarist Gordon Brown later managed to find a spot on stage during the show's finale with the Boss, and he enjoyed every minute of it. "To get to play with Bruce shows you that people in your very own community have risen to great heights, and it's an example that if you stick to following your heart you can accomplish anything," he said.

Brown has accomplished a lot himself. His band has a full-length release coming out in March after a five-song EP in December. "I really feel like we've made something that people haven't heard in quite some time," said Brown. "A real rock 'n' roll record."

The show itself not only was a real rock 'n' roll show, but also a live timeline of the veterans and younger musicians who have picked up the torch. "It was great," said D'Urso. "A lot of talented musicians and songwriters. While it was all under the rock 'n' roll umbrella, there were still enough differences in everyone's sets to please all the fans who attended." As twilight appeared, the music style changed from rock to rhythm and blues. La Bamba and the Hubcaps shook and shuffled around the stage (and in the house speakers), and were even joined by Max Weinberg, guesting on drums.

Finally, headliner Joe Grushecky and No Spring Chickens took the stage. With Springsteen already in the house, the question was would he or would he not play? Grushecky played an hour of originals and quite a few covers (also featuring Weinberg sitting in on several numbers) before he announced he was bringing up another friend from the Jersey Shore. The crowd roared as Springsteen appeared with his Telecaster and baseball cap.

Bruce handled background vocals at first, while playing guitar on Grushecky's "Talking to the King." Joe Bonanno (whose Godsons of Soul revved up the crowd earlier in the night) and Amato were also up on stage for this one. "Me and Tony were standing on the side of the stage," Bonanno recalled, "and Bruce says, 'I'm going up, you're coming with me.' I said, 'I'm not standing here!' "

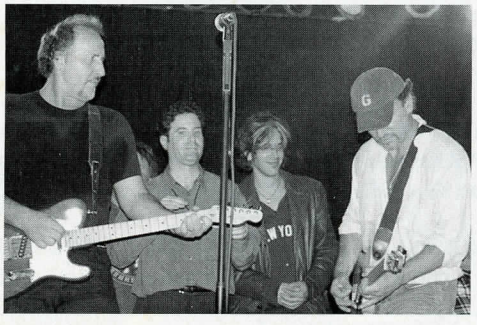
Grushecky and Springsteen next traded lead vocal duties on Springsteen's own (and rarely played) "Fire." Bruce smiled and flirted with the crowd as his band of local all-stars grew. Danny White came out to help with vocals and guitar on "Ramrod," and most of the night's performers came up to finish with "Light of Day," "Twist and Shout" and "Lucille," the last two complete with horns. As with last year's Light of Day show, even Benjamin found himself onstage by night's end, taking a turn at the mic—not a bad birthday tradition.

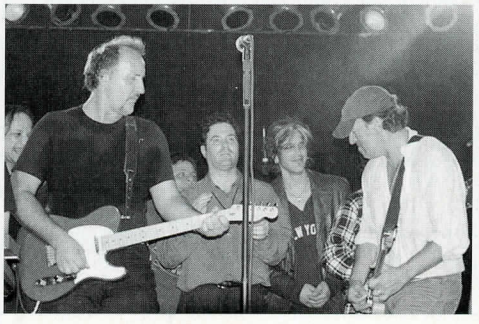
The event raised money for the Parkinson's Disease Foundation, a national, non-profit organization dedicated to supporting and promoting the highest-quality research worldwide into the cause and cure of the disease and for better symptomatic treatments. Those wishing to donate can view their website at www.pdf.org. The foundation can be reached by phone at (800) 457-6676.

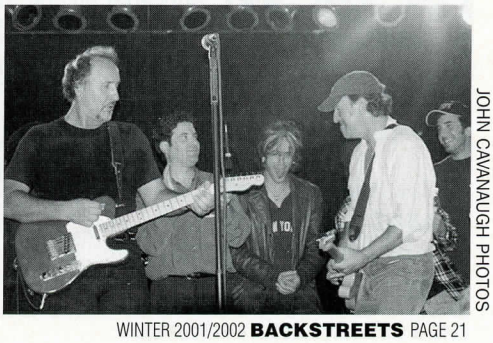
To keep things moving between sets, a side stage was set up for solo-acoustic singers like Jason Stanley, Bruce Tunkel, and Bobby Strange. "Bob Benjamin is a really great guy," said Strange, "and anyone that knows him wants to help out with the cause."

Josh Davidson

Seeing the Light: Grushecky, Benjamin, Highway 9's Brown, and Springsteen rock the benefit to a close.







JOHN CAVANAUGH PHOTOS

dateline: 12/15/01
HOLIDAY EXPRESS

SANTA CLAUS IS COMIN' TO TOWN • MERRY CHRISTMAS, BABY
Continental Airlines Arena, East Rutherford, NJ

Ever since restaurant owner Tim McLoone formed Holiday Express (www.holidayexpress.org) almost ten years ago, the band has performed innumerable times for those in need of some festive cheer in New Jersey. From hospitals to soup kitchens to tree lighting ceremonies, the Shore musicians in Holiday Express' rotating cast graciously give up their free time each Christmas season to benefit people less fortunate than themselves. Some of the better known musicians who regularly appear in the Holiday Express line-up include Bobby Bandiera, Eddie Manion, Joey Stann, and Pat Guadagno, but from time to time, Holiday Express also has additional guests appearing on stage with them like the legendary Gary U.S. Bonds.

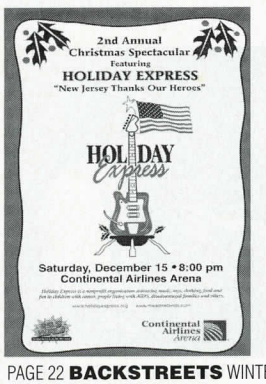
The concert scheduled for December 15 at the Continental Airlines Arena had an extra-special purpose and was called "New Jersey Salutes Our Heroes." Over 600 families from New Jersey were affected by the devastating attacks on the World Trade Center last September, and Tim McLoone's intention was to make sure those particular families benefited directly from the proceeds of the event.

Raising funds is nothing new for the members of Holiday Express—after all, it's what they do incredibly successfully each year. But last September, before the Holiday Express season began, two of the band members, mother and daughter Delores and Layonne Holmes, participated in another fundraiser for the families of the WTC attacks.

Back in the early '70s, Delores was one of the back-up vocalists in the Bruce Springsteen Band. Thirty years later, history repeated itself when both Delores and Layonne got to sit in with the band during a private function at Bruce's farm. The next thing they knew, Bruce was inviting them to perform with him on the September 21 *America: A Tribute to Heroes* telethon. Standing alongside Steven Van Zandt, Clarence Clemons, Patti Scialfa, Soozie Tyrell and Lisa Lowell, Delores and Layonne accompanied Bruce Springsteen when he performed his stunning rendition of "My City of Ruin" to the world.

"He called my mom, she three-wayed me, and after a few minutes of 'No way, this isn't Bruce,' he invited us to do the show," smiled Layonne, recalling the phone call that began their recent collaborations. "This was Wednesday, we rehearsed Thursday and did the show Friday. We had never heard the song before, but the lyrics are so beautiful and his voice so clear, it was clear it was powerful. I am so grateful for that experience—I'm still amazed that he called us when he could've called just about anybody. But that's Bruce, always true to his roots," added Layonne.

At the December 15 concert, Layonne and her mother got to sing with him again, as Bruce made yet another of his "surprise" appearances. Exactly one week after his five sell-out charity shows at Convention Hall in Asbury Park, Bruce appeared on the Meadowlands stage for "Merry Christmas, Baby" and "Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town." "We had no idea he was coming to the Meadowlands—not even Tim," explained Layonne. "So we screamed just like the audience when he came out! I really think he did it because that show was for the same people the telethon was for," continued Layonne. "He really made the night."



Maggie Powell

DEE HOLMES'
30 Year Reunion with the Boss

By Bob Makin

If you had told Delores "Dee" Holmes, a former member of the Bruce Springsteen Band in the early '70s, that she would be featured on television, CD and DVD with her former boss nearly 30 years later, she'd probably have thought you were nuts. But in September 2001, Springsteen tapped her and her equally talented daughter, Layonne, to sing backup for him during the telethon broadcast of "My City of Ruin." Dee, who runs a business with her daughter called MaDa Creations, Inc. (www.madainc.com), also sings with the Shirleys, a girl group that covers the classics; Tim McCloone's Holiday Express, the all-star outfit that raises money for charities; and Rude Awakening, a popular rock and soul cover band at the Jersey Shore. The Holiday Express show in mid-December marked the second time that Dee sang publicly with Springsteen in 2001. Based out of Matawan, Holmes took some time to chat about reuniting with Bruce, the old days of the Bruce Springsteen Band, her collaborations with her daughter and her involvement in Holiday Express.

What was your role in the Bruce Springsteen Band, and how did you get the gig?

I was one of two singers in the newly formed Bruce Springsteen Band. Before that, I was in a four-girl singing group which had just recently disbanded. Barbara Dinkins, another singer in the group, and I remained singing buddies. She called me one day after spotting a classified ad in the *Asbury Park Press.* A local band was looking for "two singers with a gospel sound."

We arrived at Tinker's surfboard factory *[Carl "Tinker" West acted as Steel Mill's manager and let Bruce use his Challenger East factory to rehearse],* and Bruce put on Van Morrison to give us an idea of what he was looking for. Then we started singing one of Bruce's songs, and he hired us on the spot. We soon learned that we had stepped into something that would truly become a lasting memory.

What memories stand out?

Hanging out in an old Victorian home in Richmond, VA, after playing a concert and listening to everyone tell the most hilarious stories. Hanging out with the band, going to breakfast, catching a movie, seeing a play. Things felt a lot like family.

How did the Bruce Springsteen Band evolve into the E Street Band, and why did it do so without you?

I was young and moving in many different directions. I had just recently separated from my husband and had a young child. It was not good timing for me. The experience was awesome, though. I'm still moving in many different directions and still enjoying the journey.

How did you reconnect with Bruce for the "My City of Ruin" performance at the telethon? What was it like being tapped for such an important performance, and how did you enjoy sharing the opportunity with your daughter?

My daughter, Layonne Holmes, and I were invited to an outdoor event at Bruce's home last summer. We got up and jammed with Bruce and some other fantastic

musicians. A special moment was when Layonne sang "In My Life." Bruce met Layonne when she was three years old and had only a few more encounters with her after that. Just before she sang the song, he commented to everyone how when she was a child, we would rehearse at the surfboard factory. She would be in her crib, loving every moment of the music, but if we stopped playing, she would cry. So, with Bobby Bandiera leading the band, Layonne sang. Bruce and I stood shoulder-to-shoulder listening to her sing. Bruce looked at me and said, "The baby." I knew exactly what he meant. Family. It felt like the old days. When he called me, I got Layonne on the phone, and Bruce told us about the telethon. He commented on how he enjoyed the harmony that we all made that day at his home. (Conference calling rules!)

Bruce and I don't talk much, but the way a person lives speaks volumes. So in my opinion, I think he wanted something familiar from the old days. I'm glad I was there then, and that I was able to be there again along with that three-year-old from that surfboard factory and crib How great is that? Not to mention the entire and amazing experience of joining forces with Bruce, Patti, Steve, Clarence, Lisa, and Soozie.

Had you heard the song before?

No. We heard it for the first time at rehearsal.

Can you share any memories about the telethon performance?

Being in New York City during such a sad and heartfelt time created such a real experience of joy and sadness at the same time.

What was it like sharing the stage once again with Bruce after so many years in between?

Words can't express it. But I can give you two: love and respect.

So you didn't keep in touch with Bruce through the years?

Not really. When we see each other, it feels like no time has passed, though.

What had you been doing with yourself between the Bruce Springsteen Band and the telethon performance?

I'm making music and running a business with my daughter, MaDa Creations, Inc. I try to keep healthy and positive.

Were you and your daughter a part of the gospel choir that sang at Bruce's holiday benefits at Convention Hall?

No, I'm sorry we missed it. Work and all. I heard every night was great. I applaud Bruce for making music with such a wide variety of people. Not only is it a great experience for the performers, but it's a great gift to the listener. I'm guessing sharing his music has been real good for him, too. Of course, we'll always be looking for the next phone call.

Left: **Dee at a University of Virginia concert.**

Above right: **with Francine Daniels and Springsteen in the Bruce Springsteen Band, c. 1972.**

Opposite page: **in recent years, Dee performing with the Shirleys at McLoone's in Sea Bright, NJ.**

What do you enjoy most about Holiday Express?

Someone once said, "Do something good for yourself and something loving for somebody else." I am doing what I love—singing—and it does some good for somebody else, and Holiday Express has been that vehicle.

Did you teach Layonne how to sing?

No. We sang "Rockin' Robin" in two-part harmony while washing dishes one day. I knew then that she would become my teacher.

Did you raise her as a single parent?

Pretty much. I was divorced when Layonne was quite young. She had such an extended family and musical family that both of our lives have been blessed. We knew early in our singing career that it would be wise to organize and to go into business: nothing like doing what you love with your best friend. We have been given opportunities to experience some of this world doing what we love. And doing it together makes it more fun.

What is MaDa Inc. and how is it doing?

MaDa stands for Mother and Daughter. MaDa Creations, Inc. is made up of two female vocalists who are available together or separately for sessions, showcases, weddings and parties. We're located at the Jersey Shore, we're doing well and growing every day. Layonne's been putting our visions on our website, www.madainc.com. Keep checking—we'll be adding new things all the time. Along with our music business we'll be doing desktop publishing, HTML, photography, greeting cards, handmade scarves, and more.

How was it to have Bruce performing with Holiday Express at the Continental Arena concert in December?

Awesome. Bruce was introduced by Gary U.S. Bonds. Bruce not only brought the audience to their feet, but he joined them in concert by walking into the crowd. Bruce totally knows what Holiday Express is about. It's about sharing and lifting the spirit of someone who's having a hard time in life. Doing what you can to help. Bravo Bruce, that night. You lifted spirits every step of the way.

How did that show feel, given that it was not only the typical fundraiser, but also a tribute to the victims and heroes of 9/11?

I was proud to have the opportunity to sing for such a brave and beautiful audience. I'm proud of how Holiday Express was a healing force that night. I'm proud of the audience and how they returned nothing but pure love. I hope my gift of song brought a little peace to someone's soul.

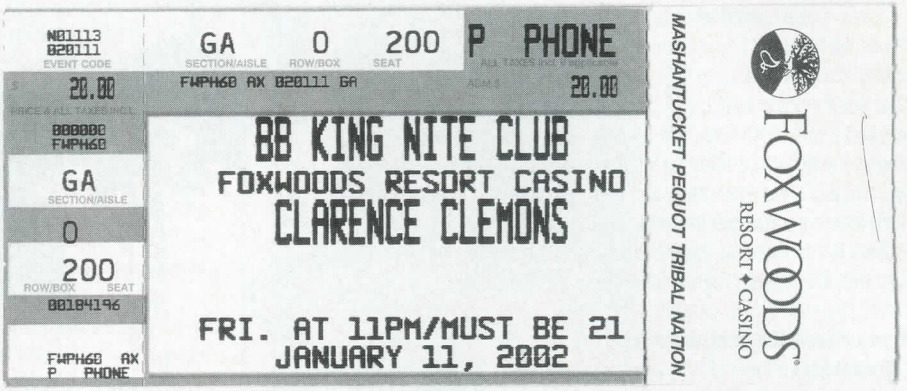
PHOTOS COURTESY OF DELORES HOLMES

dateline: 1/11/02
BEING FOR THE BENEFIT OF MR. C

RAISE YOUR HAND • PINK CADILLAC • MUSTANG SALLY • GLORY DAYS (with B.B. King)
with Clarence Clemons, Foxwoods Casino, Mashantucket, CT

Trying to figure out when and where Bruce Springsteen will show up is a very inexact science. It isn't always as simple as seeing a club-date listing for a member of the E Street Band or some artist known to be a friend of his. Clarence Clemons had played numerous shows around the Jersey shore over the years, and Bruce has been nowhere in sight for most of them. So a Clarence gig at the Foxwoods Casino in northern Connecticut would certainly seem out of the question. It's approximately a four-hour drive from where Bruce lives, and he often skips gigs by his bandmates that take place two towns from his house.

Clemons was booked for two shows at the brand new B.B. King Nite Club at Foxwoods and would be celebrating his 60th birthday the first night, January 11. And sure enough, Bruce dropped in to help him celebrate—much to the amazement of the 219 people who filled the tiny room to capacity. Bruce entered the club through the front door and happily greeted a few fans before disappearing into the dressing room at the rear. From Bruce's appearance we can assume that we're still firmly entrenched in the "baseball cap down over the eyes" era, and from the look of Springsteen's boots he might have walked to Foxwoods from the Jersey Shore.



About midway through Clarence's set Bruce made his way through the crowd to the stage. After a sloppy version of "Raise Your Hand," they launched into "Pink Cadillac" with Bruce reading his own hastily scrawled lyrics from a piece of paper on the floor—TelePrompTers have not yet made the leap to surprise club appearances. "Mustang Sally" followed, and Bruce appeared to be enjoying the evening as much as the crowd (perhaps even a little more; Bruce seemed to have made a few trips to the bar). He led the crowd in singing "Happy Birthday" to Clarence and segued right into "Glory Days," pausing a couple of times to mention that he had met Clarence when he was only ten years old. A few minutes into what would become a 12-minute version of "Glory Days," things got a bit surreal. Security guards cleared a path to the stage, and B.B. King himself wheeled in a birthday cake. Bruce seemed completely surprised by this and appeared to be meeting the blues legend for the first time right there on stage. Billy Livesay, Clarence's quick-thinking guitarist, surprised King by handing him his guitar. So for a few moments "Glory Days" became a blues jam with some signature B.B. King guitar runs. King sang a few bluesy lines of "Happy Birthday" and mentioned that it was "time for the old guys to go to bed" before beating a hasty retreat. Somehow "Glory Days" was redirected back into a rock and roll song and eventually completed.

It was a rather interesting grand opening for the new club. The meticulously arranged tables at the front of the stage were literally tossed aside and glasses and bottles hit the floor. At evening's end, the floor of the club looked as if there had been a barroom brawl. But it was just a bit of rock 'n' roll, Jersey-shore style—in a room that is certainly among the smallest Bruce Springsteen has ever played.

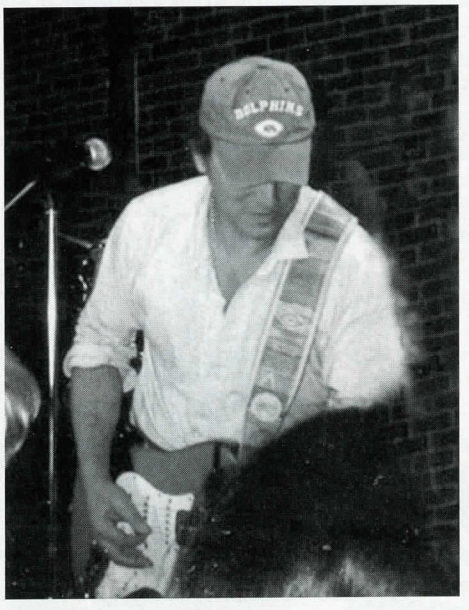
Robert S. Bader

SET:

ANOTHER PLACE
WASHINGTON BOND
SMALL THINGS
CC ANGEL
SAX IN THE CITY
HEAT OF A FULL MOON
1 STEP 2 STEP
JUMP START
LIVIN WITHOUT YOU
FATHA JOHN
SERENA
NO ONE WALKS
PARADISE BY THE C
ROAD TO PARADISE
SAVIN UP
GYPSY FIDDLE
FRIEND
ILL GO CRAZY

SHERRY DARLING
PINK CADALLAC
LIGHTS OF THE CITY

The original setlist—though a change was made when Bruce joined the Big Man's band...



THUNDER CRACK

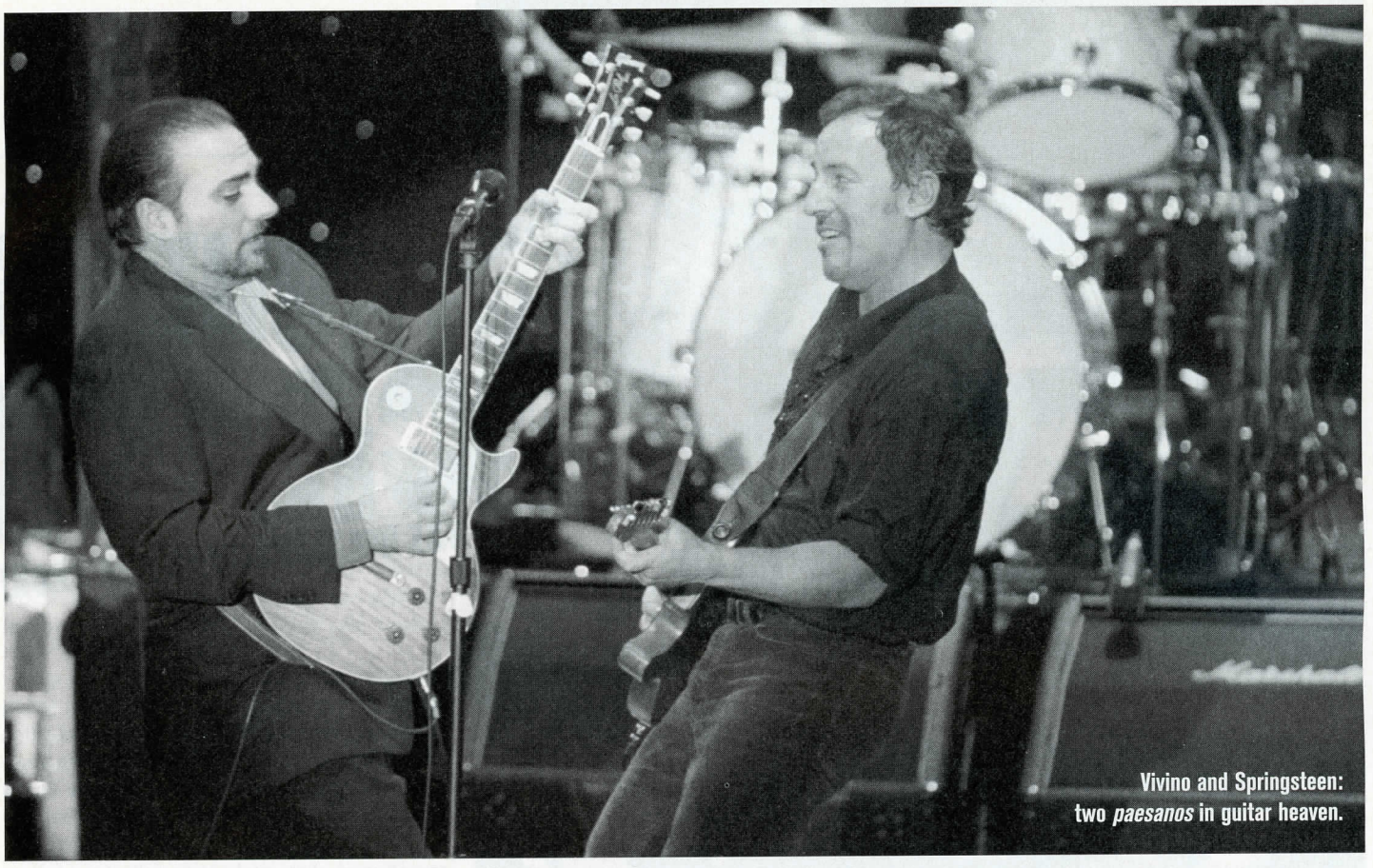
THE HOLIDAY SHOWS ARE BACK!

It was unseasonably warm in the first week of December, 2001, one of several gifts Springsteen fans received this past year. Those who had suffered through the frigid temperatures of the previous year's holiday concerts were blessed with mild, sunny weather as they gathered with their fellow concertgoers outside Asbury Park's Convention Hall in anticipation of the first of five holiday shows. The west side of the building was decorated with multicolored holiday wreaths, and as the sunlight faded, the brightly lit "Greetings From Asbury Park" sign became a welcome beacon for arriving Springsteen pilgrims, many of whom had traveled long distances—some without tickets—in order to attend the benefits. Once again, the shows were set to assist a number of local charities, and the announcement of "special guests" added to the air of excitement and anticipation that surrounded the proceedings.

In recent years, Springsteen's generous contributions to Asbury Park and the surrounding community had, for the most part, been kept fairly quiet—in some instances even anonymous. This year had been a watershed year for the city, however, due to the election of a new city government, to the untiring efforts of the Save Tillie group, and to Springsteen's own advocacy (which had included several prominent benefit appearances). It was time for

By Lisa Iannucci
Photographs by Mark Sullivan

dateline: 12/3/01 • 12/4/01 • 12/6/01 • 12/7/01 • 12/8/01



Vivino and Springsteen: two *paesanos* in guitar heaven.

Bruce to put Asbury front and center. Thus, employing a cast of characters that drew upon both his musical roots on the Jersey Shore and upon key members of the Asbury Park community, he assembled a lineup capable of delivering a powerful punch. Fans were ecstatic as Springsteen pulled out a handful of rarely performed older songs reflecting his salad days on the seaside club circuit and confirming the homecoming theme of the stand. Attendees were treated to five unforgettable nights of old favorites and welcome surprises, to moments of profound sorrow, and of joyous transformation.

Though the weather had deteriorated significantly by week's end, neither the quality of the performances nor the enthusiasm of the fans diminished. On the contrary, as the week progressed, the energy level of both the audience and the performers seemed to rise, as everyone eagerly anticipated Saturday's grand finale.

Providing the foundation was the rock solid and always entertaining Max Weinberg 7. The band's years of experience and excellent capacity for showmanship served them in good stead during lighter moments—when Richie "La Bamba" Rosenberg or Mark Pender belted out vocal or musical punch lines—and during more intense moments, as when lead guitarist Jimmy Vivino traded licks with Bruce at center stage. The seven member band was supplemented by Ed Manion and Mike Spengler, who rounded out the horn section nicely, and added an extra kick to holiday chestnuts such as "Jingle Bell Rock" and "Christmas Day."

Contributing essential vocals, violin and visuals were the "Red Headed Women": Lisa Lowell, Soozie Tyrell and Patti Scialfa. Standing stage left, the ladies, clad in black, added the requisite wall-of-sound vocals and percussion while providing a visual counterpoint to the horn section opposite them. Among the highlights of their performance were Soozie's fiddle—her delicate touches on quieter material lent them an appropriately somber air—and Lisa's solo vocal on "Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)," which nearly matched Darlene Love's original in power and intensity. It was also entertaining to just see them watching the antics on stage to their right and joke amongst themselves. One can only imagine what passed back and forth between these three old friends, who have performed as a group on and off since their Jukes days in the early '80s.

Patti also performed a brief solo set each night during which she showcased "Love (Stand Up)," a new song to be included on her "upcoming" CD. This song provided an opportunity for Bruce to comment on the lack of new material from both his wife and himself: "She only needs nine more, and the record's finished," he said with a wry grin before adding "I can't talk, though." Patti's fine new song continues in the lyrical and musical vein established on her debut release: the female perspective on relationships and commitment, conveyed with depth and insight and set to a jangling guitar arrangement recalling her work with Heartbreaker Mike Campbell.

Some rededicated E Street Band members were also in attendance for the five-night stand, with the majority of the band able to share in the festivities. In addition to Max and Patti, there were appearances by Danny Federici, Nils Lofgren, Garry Tallent, and, of course, Clarence Clemons, who drew his usual thunderous ovation upon arrival onstage during "Thundercrack." They all came and went throughout the night: Garry brought out his tuba and stand-up bass for variety; Dan and Clarence contributed solid solos (a dreadlocked Big Man also contributed the obligatory "ho-ho-ho's"); and Nils was given his own mini-set midway through the show. Lofgren was able to both uplift the audience with his searing guitar licks on "Shine Silently" and move them with soft-spoken pleas for understanding and healing on a variety of songs—including a new, full-band version of "If I Should Fall Behind," on which he was accompanied by Bruce.

Rounding out the supporting cast was the New Alliance Singers. The inclusion this year of this group of Jersey Shore locals, lending support on this and several other numbers, is more strong evidence of Springsteen's commitment to Asbury Park's future as well as its past. Throughout the five-night stand, the singers continued to transform

the powerful ballad into something extraordinary: in their hands, it transfixed, moved and inspired.

And then there were the "special guests." For starters, there was the South Community Choir of Asbury Park. Again drawing upon local connections, Bruce was able to secure this excellent gospel choir, who shook the rafters on two nights with "I've Got a Feeling" and "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands." The audience was in rapt attention as the singers, waving hands in the air in a joyous frenzy, demonstrated one source of a certain party's stage moves. Some in the crowd had likely never been exposed to a live gospel performance, and by including the Choir in the shows, it was clear that Bruce was offering fans a musical education while also paying his respects to one of his many inspirations.

There was Southside Johnny Lyon and his Jukes bandleader, veteran Jersey Shore musician Bobby Bandiera. Lyon is perhaps the only performer who can walk onstage during a Springsteen show, mock him, and then completely take over. When Southside hits the stage, it's his, and these gigs were no exception. Sporting his trademark sunglasses and black Chuck Taylor high-tops, Johnny significantly raised the energy level each night with his distinctive brand of Jersey Shore soul on tunes such as Steve Van Zandt's "This Time It's For Real" and "Baby's Gone for Good." Southside truly represents the Asbury Park sound at its finest, and it was exceptionally moving to see him joined by Bruce at the mic for the sentimental "It's Been a Long Time." The song continues to be a tribute to Asbury's past and to the many fans who have supported the scene over the years, and it was only missing the presence of Van Zandt himself to complete the nostalgic moment. (His absence was never explicitly mentioned onstage; though he was engaged in filming *The Sopranos* all week, it was rumored he would show for the final night, but an appearance never materialized.)

There was also Garland Jeffreys, a New York-based singer/songwriter with strong ties to the Asbury music scene. Jeffreys, an old friend of Bruce on whose LPs several E Streeters have guested, was given a nightly set during which he took front and center on his own "Welcome to the World" (a reggae/hip-hop diatribe on racism originally released on his 1992 RCA album *Don't Call Me Buckwheat)*, and on "New York Skyline," an older song first issued on his 1977 release *Ghost Writer*, performed in tribute both to the fallen of 9/11 and to the city itself. Jeffreys' somewhat downbeat set lacked some of the spark of the other performances, and was less than warmly received by the Bruce partisans, who seemed to dislike the deviation from E Street. On the first couple of nights, the "Broooce" calls which erupted during Jeffreys' segment of the program detracted from the solemnity of the material, finally prompting a reprimand from the host on night three (and "ground rules" laid out for the final two shows). Springsteen was obviously less than pleased with the fans' behavior, and made it clear that he did not appreciate audience members yelling out his name during other people's performances. Jeffreys did not seem to be disturbed by his lukewarm reception, and gave a steadfast performance throughout the week despite the distractions.

How low can La Bamba go?

There was Bruce Hornsby, another "F.O.B." (Friend of Bruce) who became an honorary Jersey Shore musician during the last two nights of the stand by sitting in for an unusual set. Hornsby played solo at the piano for a holiday version of his virtuoso showcase "Spider Fingers," wowing the crowd and prompting some "I-taught-him-that" joking between the two Bruces. Hornsby also performed "End of the Innocence," a song he co-wrote with Don Henley, as a duet with Springsteen. As did many songs performed during the stand, "End of the Innocence" assumed new shades of meaning after the September

2001 Holiday Concert Beneficiaries

The Alliance of Neighbors of Monmouth County (P.O. Box 8580, Red Bank, NJ 07701, 732-933-4440) gives outreach and monetary assistance to families of local victims of the World Trade Center.

The proposed **Asbury Park Performing Arts Center for Children** (c/o Family & Children's Service, 1900 Highway 35, Oakhurst, NJ 07758) will offer local, underprivileged kids a chance to get involved in music, the theater and the arts.

The Boys & Girls Club of Monmouth County (1201 Munroe Avenue, PO Box 189, Asbury Park, NJ 07712, 732-775-7862) provides opportunities for the educational, vocational, and social development of its members, with special emphasis on disadvantaged youth.

The Center in Asbury Park (806 Third Avenue, Asbury Park, NJ 07712, www.thecenterinap.com, 732-774-3416) provides personal services to people affected by the HIV disease and their families.

With a new city government and a new attitude, the **City of Asbury Park** (One Municipal Plaza, Asbury Park, NJ 07712, 732-775-2100) is experiencing a Renaissance in its downtown, its neighborhoods, and its soon-to-be-revitalized beachfront.

The Community FoodBank of New Jersey (31 Evans Terminal Road, Hillside, NJ 07205, 908-355-3663) links a great supply of food and other groceries (18 million pounds a year) with a great need.

Epiphany House (300 Fourth Avenue, Asbury Park, NJ 07712, 732-775-0720) provides transitional housing and a continuum of health care and social services to homeless women with children who seek to recover from addiction to alcohol or other drugs.

The FoodBank of Monmouth and Ocean Counties (3300 Route 66, Neptune, NJ 07753, 732-918-2600) reaches out to needy people through the distribution of food, training, expansion of programs and diligent advocacy to eliminate hunger.

The Hope Academy Charter School (700 Grand Avenue, Asbury Park, NJ 07712, 732-988-4227) seeks to provide the finest academic, character development, and service learning programs for almost 100 Asbury Park children.

Interfaith Neighbors (810 Fourth Avenue, Asbury Park, NJ 07712, 732-775-0525) provides rental subsidies to underprivileged people; provides meals to the elderly, infirm and impoverished; and constructs and rehabilitates houses for the underprivileged.

The Parker Family Health Clinic (PO Box 2189, Red Bank, NJ 07701, 732-212-0777) operates a free healthcare facility where people, without medical insurance or the ability to pay for medical care, can be treated with dignity and confidentiality.

Prevention First (1806 Highway 35, Oakhurst, NJ 07755, 732-663-1800) is dedicated to drug and violence prevention (rather than treatment) services for children.

The Stephen Crane House (508 Fourth Avenue, Asbury Park, NJ 07712), boyhood home of *The Red Badge of Courage* author Stephen Crane, is undergoing extensive rehabilitation and has been the venue for many plays, poetry readings, and community literary events.

The Women's Center of Monmouth County (One Bethany Road, Building 3, Suite 42, Hazlet, NJ 07730, 732-264-9114) serves families affected by domestic violence and sexual assault in Monmouth County.

11 attacks, its poignancy seeming to reflect the mood of the country in these new, darker times. It was truly a heartbreaking moment when Bruce stepped to the mic to sing, "O beautiful for spacious skies/but now those skies are threatening"; it seemed the song had been written specifically for this moment.

Rounding out Hornsby's set was the surprising and hilarious Hot Chocolate cover "You Sexy Thing," introduced jokingly by Hornsby, stepping out from behind the piano, as one of the all-time great accordion songs. Most of the audience knew the words and enthusiastically echoed Bruce's vocal exhortations as he strutted his stuff at the lip of the stage. They weren't just messing around—this was a full-blown cover, complete with horns. Any doubts about Hornsby's inclusion in the holiday show lineup were assuaged after this hilarious finale.

Three middle-aged guys havin' a party.

There was also, amazingly, Elvis Costello, who strode confidently onstage midway through the final night, wearing his usual spectacles and leather jacket, to perform an acoustic version of his classic "Alison," which included a Smokey Robinson medley. In fine voice, Elvis delighted the audience by generously sharing his mic with Bruce throughout.

Rounding out each evening was a well-deserved solo spot in the encores by the underappreciated Bobby Bandiera. Acknowledging this as he introduced him, Bruce commented on Bobby's centrality to the scene, and on his embodiment of everything it represents: showmanship, camaraderie, musicianship, and most importantly, dedication. Bobby can always be counted on to appear not only at gigs of friends and bandmates, but also at many benefit performances, and to provide whatever is needed in the way of vocals/accompaniment, often acting as bandleader as well. Bandiera often includes Beatles numbers in his solo sets, but he delivered an unexpected holiday treat when he stepped to the mic to sing, "Here Comes the Sun" in memory of the late George Harrison. In a show packed with emotional moments, this had to be one of the most memorable. In a clear, mellifluous tenor, Bobby sang lyrics that, again, seemed written especially for the times.

Of course, after all this excitement and emotion, no one wanted to leave. Cue the return of Southside Johnny, who was summoned by Bruce to perform the Jukes classic "I Don't Want to Go Home" and delivered each night in high style. The wisecracking continued between him and Bruce, as the latter several times referred to Lyon as "Sunshine," while one night Johnny accused Bruce of falsely trying to claim writing credit on "Love on the Wrong Side of Town." Could a sitcom be far behind?

Lest we forget, though, it was Bruce's show at these holiday extravaganzas. Some special magic occurs when he performs in December after the death of a Beatle. (For many fans, the 12/9/80 Spectrum show stands out as one of his most intense, emotional performances.) Here in Asbury Park in 2001, it was time to pay tribute to George Harrison. Many fans anticipated some sort of remembrance, but there were gasps of surprise and delight when Bruce began the first night's show with Harrison's "Something" and "My Sweet Lord." The songs were performed somberly, Soozie Tyrell accompanying Bruce's acoustic guitar and vocals with lonesome fiddle laments. "We'll miss you, George," he said quietly as he concluded the song and stepped away from the mic. Opening Bruce's portion of the shows on other nights were selections from his "Wild & Innocent" days: "Wild Billy's Circus Story" with Garry on the tuba, and a rare solo piano performance of "Incident on 57th Street," which stunned with its simple beauty and romanticism. Even the most jaded of fans could not fail to be moved by the sight of Bruce at the piano, a lone spotlight illuminating him on the darkened stage. He was supported by the house band for his next segment of the program, which began with "Thundercrack," a holiday gift to the many longtime fans present, during which a surprised Springsteen had the lyrics shouted back to him by a large portion of the audience. Following this tune, which had not been played live in over two decades, came "Seaside Bar Song," another unexpected delight. Dedicating the song each night to the Stone Pony and its owner, Domenic Santana, Bruce talked about how going to see Bo Diddley inspired him to write the frat-rock number. The resurrection of these two songs, which had been in many fans' collections for years before being officially released on the 1998 *Tracks* box, was truly special—many could finally say they had a taste of what it must have been like back in '74.

After the guest sets, Bruce returned to perform more vintage material from *The Wild, the Innocent, & the E Street Shuffle,* along with the expected holiday fare. Taking full advantage of the augmented horn section, he played a rare uptempo version of "The E Street Shuffle," which he began by assuming the role of an orchestra conductor: after some off-key "warm-up" notes by the horns, Bruce made a show of stepping to center stage, tapping a pencil on the mic stand, and conducting them on the introductory bars. The horns also shone on "Kitty's Back," and on the rousing, saxophone-driven "So Young and in Love." Bookending the set were "Merry Christmas Baby" and the Phil Spector classic "Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)," both of which evoked the proper holiday spirit, the appropriate holiday headgear being thrown onstage by audience members on cue each night.

New Jersey Skyline

The Reds in black

Blow, Big Man, *blow!*

But the shows' centerpiece was clearly "My City of Ruin." The release that week of an acoustic version of the song (on the tie-in CD to the *Tribute to Heroes* TV benefit) seemed to have forever linked it to the September 11 attacks. However, it was clear that part of Bruce's intention with these shows was to reclaim it for Asbury Park, just as the shows themselves were about Asbury's own reclamation. Thus, each night when he came out for the encores, Bruce stood alone at the piano, where he spent several minutes personally promoting various Asbury Park businesses and charities, and thanking all of the locals who assisted in coordinating the entertainment, ensuring that the evening really did belong to the city. He also took the opportunity to thank all of the various Shore musicians who contributed their time and talents, affirming the unique bond they share, and commenting on how much it meant to him to have them all present. Finally, sitting down at the keyboard, he would begin the song himself with a simple piano arrangement. Moving to the center-stage mic for the second verse, he would then bring in the full band for the cathartic finale.

Though the song was indeed reclaimed for Asbury, it was difficult not to make other associations. The Jersey Shore (and the East Coast in general) had been hit especially hard by what had happened during the year, and there were many heavy hearts present. But in finest gospel tradition, the pent-up emotions of the past weeks—anger, fear, sorrow—were joyously released through music, as everyone joined in the song's refrain: "come on rise up!" Echoing the transformative simplicity of Jimmy Cliff's "Many Rivers to Cross" and the healing power of "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands," "My City of Ruin" had this year evolved into something more than a rallying cry for Asbury

HOT CHOCOLATE AND OTHER DELIGHTS

BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN AND FRIENDS "JAM UP" WITH FIVE NIGHTS OF SEASIDE BAR SONGS AT ASBURY PARK, NJ'S CONVENTION HALL

While Bruce's assembled guests were a big part of the entire show, there were many times when other artists received an extra spotlight; we've noted with initials (PS=Patti Scialfa, etc.) when the lead was taken by someone other than Springsteen.

12/2/01 REHEARSAL

All afternoon and into the evening, Bruce and Friends rehearsed not only the material that would surface over the next week, but additional songs as well. Little Steven was on hand for "Affection"; "Time of Your Life" and "Hearts of Stone" also received run-throughs.

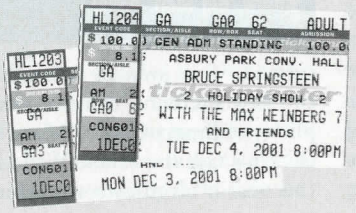
12/3/01 NIGHT ONE

NOTES: Springsteen revisits the scene of 2000's pair of Holiday shows [see *Backstreets* #70] for 2001's kick-off. The concerts are billed again as Bruce with the Max Weinberg 7 and Friends, and many of last year's guests (like Southside Johnny, Bobby Bandiera and the Redheaded Women) are back. While Roy Bittan and Steve Van Zandt are M.I.A., the remaining members of the E Street Band are present and accounted for on this opening night and for the entire holiday stand. They come in and out over the course of the show, adding more E Street Flavor to Max's house band—Garry Tallent's standup bass on "Jingle Bell Rock," Danny Federici's organ on "Thundercrack"—and occasionally, as on "Kitty's Back," the E Streeters are all on stage at the same time. A notable new Friend on this first night is Garland Jeffreys, getting two songs in the spotlight.

Night one marks the first performances of "Thundercrack" and "Seaside Bar Song" since the '70s. The latter is dedicated nightly to Domenic Santana, the Stone Pony and the Saint, "for keeping music alive in Asbury Park." "Jam Up," played each night by the Max Weinberg 7, is a Tommy Ridgely tune from the mid-50s, which served as the theme of legendary '60s Philly disc jockey Jerry Blavat and was also recorded by the MW7 on their self-titled debut album.

While a similar two-and-a-half hour set is played at all five shows, closing nightly with "Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town," each night brings unique touches. Night one opens with Springsteen's personal tribute to George Harrison: "Something" (featuring Soozie Tyrell on fiddle) followed by "My Sweet Lord." Jimmy Vivino's spotlight song for the remainder of the stand would be "Christmas Day," but on this first night he pulls out "Santa Claus, Santa Claus" a rather obscure Louis Jordan single (written for Louis by Teddy Edwards) from 1968.

Something/My Sweet Lord
Jingle Bell Rock
Jam Up (MW7)
Santa Claus, Santa Claus (JV)
Thundercrack
Seaside Bar Song
Love (Stand Up) (PS)
Spanish Dancer (PS)
Welcome to the World (GJ)
New York Skyline (GJ)
This Time It's for Real (SSJ)
Love on the Wrong Side of Town (SSJ)
It's Been a Long Time (SSJ)
Black Books (NL)
Shine Silently (NL)
Merry Christmas, Baby
So Young and in Love
Kitty's Back
Christmas (Baby, Please Come Home)
My City of Ruin
Here Comes the Sun (BB)
I Don't Want to Go Home (SSJ)
Rosalita
Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town



12/4/01 NIGHT TWO

NOTES: Rather than opening with the George Harrison songs, the concert begins with a festive duo bridged by Garry Tallent's tuba: "Deck the Halls" into "Wild Billy's Circus Story." "The E Street Shuffle" takes the place of "So Young and in Love." Birthday boy Southside Johnny also switches one number, replacing "Love on the Wrong Side of Town" with "Talk to Me"—and indeed the crowd does just that, serenading Southside with "Happy Birthday." Jimmy Vivino's duet with Bruce for night two and for the remainder of the week is Detroit Junior's "Christmas Day." In the crowd: WWF wrestler Mankind (who seemed to know all the words) and fellow Jersey Shore musician John Eddie.

Deck the Halls (horns)
Wild Billy's Circus Story
Jingle Bell Rock
Jam Up (MW7)
Christmas Day (JV)
Thundercrack
Seaside Bar Song
Love (Stand Up) (PS)
Spanish Dancer (PS)
Welcome to the World (GJ)
New York Skyline (GJ)
This Time It's for Real (SSJ)
Talk to Me (SSJ)
It's Been a Long Time (SSJ)
Black Books (NL)
Shine Silently (NL)
Merry Christmas, Baby
The E Street Shuffle
Kitty's Back
Christmas (Baby, Please Come Home)
My City of Ruin
Here Comes the Sun (BB)
I Don't Want to Go Home (SSJ)
Rosalita
Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town

12/6/01 NIGHT THREE

NOTES: A new special guest begins the show, as the South Community Choir of Asbury Park provides a gospel revival opener with two traditional songs. "I've Got a Feeling" is familiar to *Sopranos* fans from a version on the *Peppers & Eggs* compilation, by the Campbell Brothers with Katie Jackson; with Lofgren's "Black Books," it's the second song from that album played at the holiday shows. During Garland Jeffreys' songs, some "Brooocing" from the crowd clearly gets under Springsteen's skin, and he scolds the "doofuses" in the crowd—his word—with a "shut the fuck up"-style reprimand. "If I Should Fall Behind" is only the second post-'70s Springsteen composition played at the holiday shows (the other is "My City of Ruin")—and it's in Lofgren's set. Bruce does help out, though, joining in as Nils plays a new arrangement of the *Lucky Town* song in place of "Black Books." "The E Street Shuffle" incorporates Curtis Mayfield's "Move on Up."

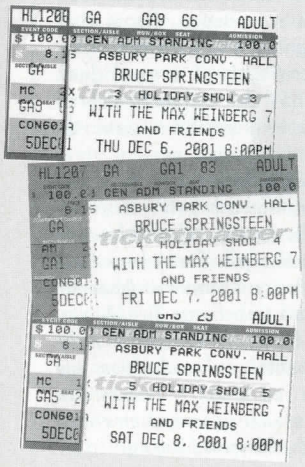
He's Got the Whole World in His Hands (SCC)
I've Got a Feeling (SCC)
Jingle Bell Rock
Jam Up (MW7)
Christmas Day (JV)
Thundercrack
Seaside Bar Song
Love (Stand Up) (PS)
Spanish Dancer (PS)
Welcome to the World (GJ)
New York Skyline (GJ)
This Time It's for Real (SJ)
Talk to Me (SJ)
It's Been a Long Time (SJ)
Shine Silently (NL)
If I Should Fall Behind (NL)
Merry Christmas, Baby
The E Street Shuffle
Kitty's Back
Christmas (Baby, Please Come Home)
My City of Ruin
Here Comes the Sun (BB)
I Don't Want to Go Home (SSJ)
Rosalita
Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town

12/7/01 NIGHT FOUR

NOTES: The evening's musical highlight (and *second*-biggest surprise) comes at the beginning: After the horn-intro of "Deck the Halls" comes "Incident on 57th Street," a beautiful rendition featuring Springsteen at the piano, along with Soozie on fiddle and the other Redheaded Women on vocals. Though Jeffreys is absent this night, Springsteen still lays down one main ground rule, saying that it's "fucking aggravating" when fans call out his name during someone else's performance: "Southside gets in a real tizzy fit when that happens." But fans are able to easily circumvent this one, considering the new special guest: Bruce ("Broooce!") Hornsby. Hornsby's performance energizes the middle portion of the concert, and he quickly wins the crowd over. His "Spider Fingers" solo

jam incorporates "O Come All Ye Faithful" and "Jingle Bells"; he and Bruce S. share a duet of "End of the Innocence" (a song Hornsby co-wrote with Don Henley) with a sax solo from Clarence. Hornsby leaves the piano and straps on an accordion as the two Bruces wrap up Hornsby's set with tonight's real shocker and a definite first: a full (and hilarious) cover of Hot Chocolate's "You Sexy Thing" (probably Springsteen's most bizarre song selection since "Achy Breaky Heart," 3/23/93). Not only does Hornsby get sufficiently "Broooced" by a knowing crowd, he gets to say "something I've always wanted to say—'Blow, Big Man, *blow!*'" Southside's only performance this week of "Baby's Gone for Good." Nils Lofgren also plays a one-off, his version of "The Star-Spangled Banner" in place of "Shine Silently." "So Young and in Love" returns in place of "The E Street Shuffle."

Deck the Halls (horns)
Incident on 57th Street
Jingle Bell Rock
Jam Up (MW7)
Christmas Day (JV)
Thundercrack
Seaside Bar Song
Love (Stand Up) (PS)
Spanish Dancer (PS)
Spider Fingers (BH)
End of the Innocence (BH)
You Sexy Thing (BH)
This Time It's for Real (SSJ)
Baby's Gone for Good (SSJ)
It's Been a Long Time (SSJ)
The Star-Spangled Banner (NL)
If I Should Fall Behind (NL)
Merry Christmas, Baby
So Young and in Love
Kitty's Back
Christmas (Baby, Please Come Home)
My City of Ruin
Here Comes the Sun (BB)
I Don't Want to Go Home (SSJ)
Rosalita
Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town



12/8/01 NIGHT FIVE

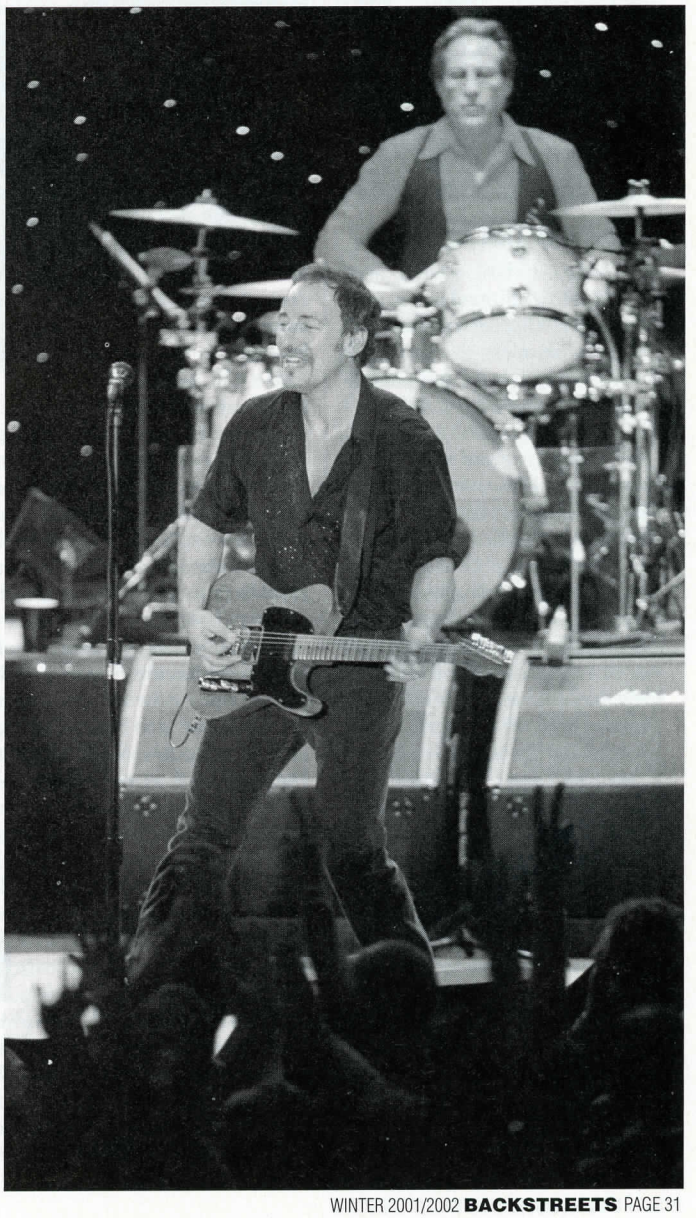
NOTES: Aside from the absence of Bobby Bandiera, night five is an extra-long grand finale that brings together all of the week's guests and then some. Jeffreys, Hornsby, and the South Community Choir all made encore appearances. "Spider Fingers" incorporates "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," "Jingle Bells," and "White Christmas." Elvis is also in the building—Costello, that is—for a duet with Bruce on "Alison," also incorporating a Smokey Robinson medley of "Tracks of My Tears" and "Tears of a Clown." "The E Street Shuffle" adds "Move on Up." "Christmas (Baby, Please Come Home)" brings Costello and Jon Landau to the stage. In the encores, with Bobby B. otherwise committed, Nils Lofgren takes over for a fine rendition of "Here Comes the Sun," so that not a night went by without a George Harrison tribute. Perhaps the best sight of all: Evan Springsteen wearing his father's guitar, and later being dragged offstage by his dad after "refusing" to leave. No one wanted to go home. Also in the house: James Gandolfini (entering to chants of "To*ny! To*ny!") and Christopher Meloni of the Sopranos; comedian and *Law & Order* star Richard Belzer.

He's Got the Whole World in His Hands (SCC)
I've Got a Feeling (SCC)
Deck the Halls (horns)
Incident on 57th Street
Jingle Bell Rock
Jam Up (MW7)
Christmas Day (JV)
Thundercrack
Seaside Bar Song
Love (Stand Up) (PS)
Spanish Dancer (PS)
Welcome to the World (GJ)
New York Skyline (GJ)
Spider Fingers (BH)
End of the Innocence (BH)
You Sexy Thing (BH)
Alison (EC)
This Time It's for Real (SSJ)
Love on the Wrong Side of Town (SSJ)
It's Been a Long Time (SSJ)
Shine Silently (NL)
If I Should Fall Behind (NL)
Merry Christmas, Baby
The E Street Shuffle
Kitty's Back
Christmas (Baby, Please Come Home)
My City of Ruin
Here Comes the Sun (NL)
I Don't Want to Go Home (SSJ)
Rosalita
Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town

—Christopher Phillips & Lisa Iannucci

Park; it had become an emotional exhortation of forgiveness and understanding, a plea for unity, and for the strength to overcome overwhelming grief and to carry on together.

The shows would not end on that note, however—after all, it was Christmastime. So, as he did the previous year, Bruce delivered his "only in Asbury Park" holiday gift each night—a rollicking "Rosalita," to the obvious delight of the faithful. While not differing much from versions of old, it did get everyone up and dancing again in time for the grand finale, the obligatory "Santa Claus Is Comin' to Town." As expected, various friends and family members gathered onstage in holiday costume as the song progressed: Santa, reindeer and a snowman as well as many elves, and later in the stand, various children (including Bruce's own) dressed in festive pajamas. Carrying gift baskets filled with candy canes onstage with them, the participants all hurled the goodies enthusiastically into the crowd. Especially notable were Bruce's aunt and mother, who seemed to delight in sneaking up behind him and trying to get him to dance with them, once prompting him to admonish his mother in jest, "Get away, you're scaring me!" In the end, though, Asbury Park and its resurgence was the focus of the five night stand, and the shows were unmistakably about healing and hope. The fans who had come to the shore to receive their expected holiday gift were this year also given transcendence, and at last, in the true spirit of the season, happiness, joy and peace.



Fans donate Collection to A.P. Library

Check This Out!

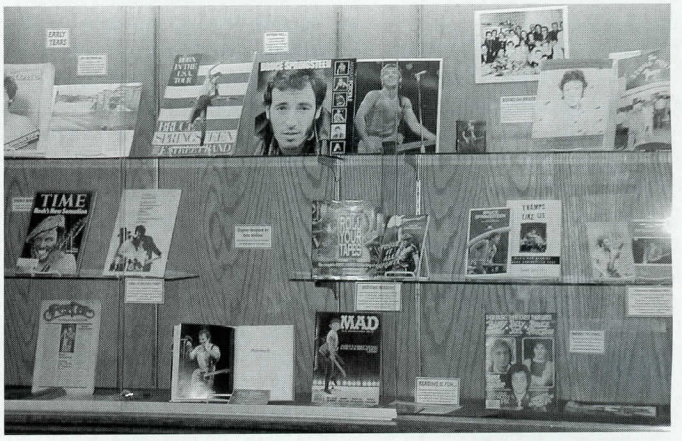
By Andrew E. Massimino

It's doubtful that when Bruce Springsteen began his rock 'n' roll dream over 30 years ago it included a special place in the hometown library. Even though Springsteen has recited from the stage that his mother wanted him to "be an author, write books," no one from those early days could have foreseen the incredible amount of ink that's been put to paper regarding the life and music of the singer-songwriter. The Asbury Park Public Library now houses the evidence: an enormous collection of almost 900 books and magazines, generously donated by fans worldwide, was presented to the library on September 21, 2001, the weekend of Springsteen's 52nd birthday.

Backstreets was honored to help gather and organize the collection, which features publications from 24 countries in 19 languages. Including the truly indispensable works by the critics, biographers, scholars, journalists, and fans of Bruce Springsteen, the collection also gathers unusual and obscure publications that would otherwise be lost to the dustbin of history (a 1981 issue of the Yugoslavian magazine *Dzuboks* devoted ten pages to Springsteen; a 1976 issue of *Rona Barrett's Hollywood* asked, "Superstar or Super-hype?"). It is the most extensive effort undertaken by music fans to collect and preserve the written history of a modern-era musician.

As for the size of the collection, however, Springsteen himself weighed in. On the final night of the holiday benefit concerts, he explained with a smile where there's one such accumulation that might be larger: "My mother's basement."

Earlier that day—December 8, 2001—the library hosted a dedication ceremony for the official unveiling of the Bruce Springsteen Collection. Well over 100 fans, as well as reporters and other local media, came to the Asbury Park Public Library for the event, organized on behalf of Backstreets by Save Tillie. Speakers included the honorable Kevin G. Sanders, Mayor of Asbury Park, (who also did the official ribbon cutting); *Backstreets* publisher and editor Christopher Phillips; Councilwoman and superhero Kate Mellina; Maggie Powell, representing several European fanzines; and the director of the library, Robert Stewart.



EDWARD WILLIAMS JR. PHOTOS

The tip of the iceberg: a sampling of the collection now housed at the Asbury Park Public Library, on display at the dedication ceremony.

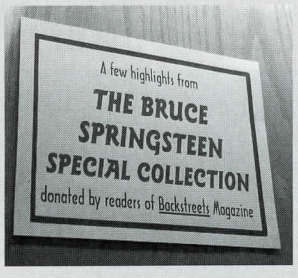
"The worldwide scope of this collection will establish the library as a major research center for everyone seriously interested in studying the life of one of New Jersey's most famous musicians," said Stewart. "The library and our board of directors look forward to working with the donors to make the entire collection accessible both to visitors to the library, and those who access the collection by way of the Internet."

The Springsteen Collection has already inspired many to plan trips to the area. E-mails have poured in from around the world congratulating all those involved and expressing a strong desire to peruse the collection. Librarians from Penn State University and the University of Illinois have weighed in with their support and respect.

There is a whole global community of fans who feel a strong tie to Asbury Park; Phillips talked about these ties that bind when he addressed the crowd at the ceremony: "Many of us from around the world feel a connection to Asbury Park, to its history and to its potential. So when we began putting this collection together, there was a real outpouring of donations and support.... We're thrilled that Asbury is going through tremendous transitions, and this collection is just one example of how, given the opportunity to take part in the revitalization of Asbury Park, this worldwide community of ours will rise up and jump at the chance."

Many of the e-mails *Backstreets* received expressed similar sentiments, from fans thrilled with the selection of Asbury Park as the home for this collection. I am, too. As a 15-year-old, I would occasionally find myself at the public library in Dallas, looking up "Springsteen, Bruce" in the card catalog and periodical indexes, scrounging for any tidbit I could find. Now, thanks to so many in this community of fans, most of those tidbits are housed in one place, and together they form a fantastic portrait of the magic, the mystery, and the ministry of Bruce Springsteen. As *Backstreets* readers well know, it is a portrait that is vital and ongoing and with each new brushstroke there is confident hope that the collection will continue to grow and to serve.

Many thanks to all the fans who donated material to be part of the collection; further donations of printed material are encouraged. The Asbury Park Public Library is located at the corner of First and Grand: 500 First Avenue, Asbury Park, NJ 07712-6193. To contact the library about donations you can also call (732) 774-4221, fax (732) 988-6101, or send an e-mail rstewart@asburypark.lib.nj.us.



HIGH ON THE SHELF

I wanted to express my gratitude to all involved in the Asbury Park Library Collection. I sent in my five issues of a tiny magazine I produced called *No Surrender.* At the time I did the magazine, I was 15. Nobody outside of my family knew that. It was very cheaply produced—I typed it on a manual typewriter, one letter at a time, and photocopied it. I gave away the first issue, and the response was staggering: I eventually was shipping to a dozen different countries, and my parents' mailbox was full to the brim with letters. I corresponded with people who to this day I have never met; it was a real thrill. To see my first issue in the display case at the library was such a surprise. To think what I did after school everyday in 11th grade would someday make it to any sort of collection is truly an honor I will never forget. Thank you for allowing me to share my slice of Springsteen with everyone.

Tom Keifer
via e-mail

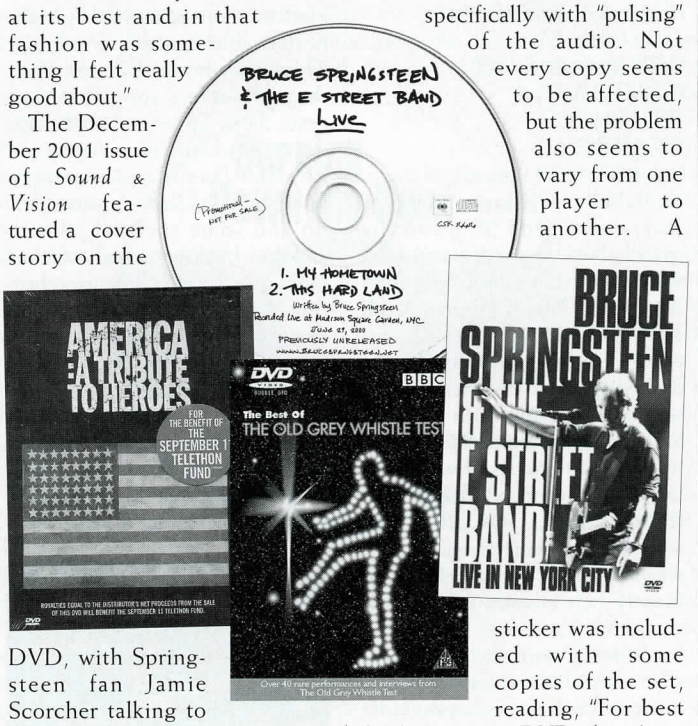
ON DISC

Seven months after the premiere of Springsteen's first official full-length concert film, fans were able to bag it up and take it home. Originally aired on HBO in April 2001, a two-DVD and two-VHS edition of Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band's *Live in New York City* hit stores in time for the holidays.

The release, greatly expanded for home video, also brought a two-track CD-single, marked as "Promotional—not for sale" and paired with the DVD as a freebie at some stores. With two exclusive live tracks—"My Hometown" and "This Hard Land," recorded on June 29, 2000—the bonus CD (CSK56656) came in a plain black die-cut sleeve, sealed separately from *Live in New York City*. According to Sony representatives, the disc was intended as an incentive for stores to pre-order the video.

While tracking down the CD may have caused headaches for some collectors, the more indispensable "bonus disc" is the one that was part of every copy of the *Live in New York City* set—the second DVD. The first disc presents the HBO special in its entirety, a worthy enough release. But disc two (as well as the second VHS tape) adds an additional 11 tracks, filling the set out to near-actual concert length, if not actual running order. An added "featurette" entitled "New York City Serenade" provides further glimpses of performances that didn't make the cut otherwise, including the new verse of "Blood Brothers."

In all, the released documentation of the most recent tour is unprecedented in Springsteen's long history. Springsteen talked to Bill Flanagan for VH1 about the nature of the filming: "We were getting towards the end of the tour and hadn't filmed anything.... My manager Jon Landau said, 'Look, Sony will give us these cameras and the last couple of nights we can film the thing. If you like it, great. If not, okay.' I said, 'Okay. As long as it doesn't get in the way of doing the last shows here in the city.' .... I had a few suggestions about the lighting and this, that, and the other thing. I didn't think about it after that, because it wasn't super-expensive. If it didn't come out good, it didn't come out good. Then I saw it a few weeks after we stopped and said, 'Wow, this is a pretty good record of who the band is and what we do.'... I felt so relieved when we saw it, because I realized there had not been any real extended video record of the E Street Band. To have captured the band at its best and in that fashion was something I felt really good about."


BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN & THE E STREET BAND
Live
(Promotional — NOT FOR SALE)
1. MY HOMETOWN
2. THIS HARD LAND
Written by Bruce Springsteen
Recorded live at Madison Square Garden, NYC
June 29, 2000
PREVIOUSLY UNRELEASED
AMERICA: A TRIBUTE TO HEROES
FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE SEPTEMBER 11 TELETHON FUND
DVD
BBC
The Best Of
THE OLD GREY WHISTLE TEST
Over 40 rare performances and interviews from The Old Grey Whistle Test
BRUCE SPRINGSTEEN & THE E STREET BAND
LIVE IN NEW YORK CITY

The December 2001 issue of *Sound & Vision* featured a cover story on the DVD, with Springsteen fan Jamie Scorcher talking to quite a few of the major players who worked on the set. Scorcher's article suggests that Bruce was quite involved in the process of bringing the stage performance to the screen.

After agreeing to the filming, it was Springsteen's decision to keep cameras unobtrusive, as director Hilson explained to Scorcher: "Because Bruce said no to using cranes and camera tracks, we had no choice but to stay focused on the performance—which is the beauty of this project. We had a handheld camera on stage and two steadycams near the stage, but that was as fancy as it got."

Mastering engineer Bob Ludwig described Bruce as more involved in the process than most artists, spending two days with Ludwig: "He spent a lot of time working in a separate editing room. He would go in there and listen to one of his raps, for instance, and decide to take out a phrase or put something back in. He would just keep going back and forth like that."

Ludwig told Scorcher, "He cares a great deal about having everything be exactly as he wants it to be... Bruce spends a lot of time making these final decisions, like what songs are going to stay and which ones are going to go."

Some readers have reported problems with playback on the second disc of the DVD set, specifically with "pulsing" of the audio. Not every copy seems to be affected, but the problem also seems to vary from one player to another. A sticker was included with some copies of the set, reading, "For best fidelity, in your DVD player's set up menu, set Dolby compression to 'off.' " A call to Sony Customer Service about the sound problems resulted in one suggested solution: for DVDs run through a standard stereo speaker setup, change the DVD audio to "PMC Stereo" and switch the "Dymanic Range Control" in DVD setup to "Off." That "solution" may not satisfy viewers who want to take full advantage of a home theater setup. For anyone experiencing difficulties with the DVD, we recommend calling Sony Customer Service at 1-800-255-7514, or in New Jersey, (856) 722-8224.

In more DVD news, Springsteen also appears on *The Best of the Old Grey Whistle Test*, a 2-DVD set from BBC Worldwide Video in the U.K. *The Old Grey Whistle Test* is an exceptional British rock show that began in 1971 and has been the source of significant Bruce footage over the years; this set celebrates the show's 30th anniversary. Springsteen represents just a small portion of the four-plus hours of viewing here, but it's very worthwhile material. The July 8, 1978 "Rosalita" performance can be seen here in its entirety—including the band intros cut from the version seen on Springsteen's own *Video Anthology*. Also included is a *Darkness*-era post-show interview conducted by Bob Harris. Non-European collectors take note: the DVD itself is code-free, but still requires a PAL-capable player for viewing.

Another DVD brings the offical release of "My City of Ruin." Released simultaneously on DVD, VHS and CD, *America: A Tribute to Heroes* captures performances from the September 20, 2001 telethon, including Springsteen's opening rendition of the song. Though the Bruce track leads off all three formats, the two-CD set offers an abbreviated version of the tribute, while the home video versions present the telethon in its entirety.

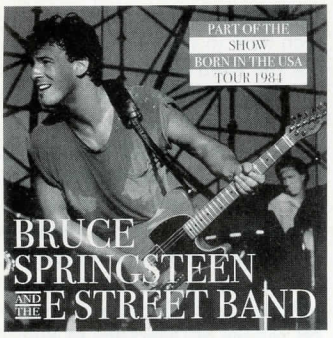
While referred to by fans (and by Springsteen himself) as "My City of Ruins" since its performance debut on December 17, 2000, the song's first official release strikes the final "s" from the title. Spelled this way on all three formats—as well as in promotional material and solicitation sheets—"My City of Ruin" does appear to be the official title of the song, rather than a typo, no matter how Bruce sings it. All net proceeds benefit the United Way's September 11th Telethon Fund.

Two more recent CD compilations feature previously released Springsteen songs. A holiday installment of the "NOW That's What I Call Music!" series, called *NOW That's What I Call Christmas!*, includes Springsteen's old yuletide standby, "Santa Claus is Comin' to Town." "Land of Hope and Dreams" appears on *God Bless America*, a Columbia collection issued in the wake of the September 11 attacks, to benefit the Twin Towers Fund. The live version is taken from the *Live in New York City* album. *God Bless America* entered the *Billboard* album charts at number one—bringing Bruce back to the top of the album charts for the first time since 1995's *Greatest Hits*.

—Christopher Phillips

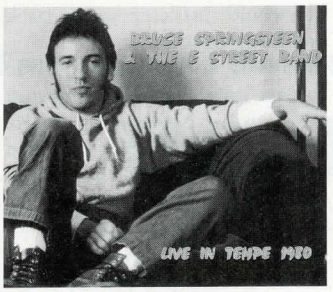
ON COLLECTING

By Fred Mills



Part of the Show
(Back Streets 2CD)
VENUE: CNE Stadium
CITY: Toronto, Ontario
DATE: July 26, 1984
SOUND QUALITY: 9
PERFORMANCE: 7
PACKAGING: 6

The unfortunately named Back Streets label debuts with what's for the most part a very impressive offering, at least sonically: a purported unreleased board recording. At two discs (and with this title), it's obviously not a complete concert, just the second half (from "Hungry Heart" through the "Detroit Medley/ Twist and Shout" finale). With a pro-shot video of this portion of the show in circulation, the actual source here is most likely the stereo audio track of the video; call it, more accurately, a line recording. (The same material has also recently been booted as *Hot Fun in the Summertime*, from the Doberman label offshoot Pincher.)The sound borders on flawless, with the only caveat that, as with many board tapes, the "mix" is, well, unmixed and therefore lacking in depth; the instruments and backing vocals all have equal prominence, with Bruce's vocals way up front. It's a good, if not remarkable, *Born in the U.S.A.* gig, with no real surprises on display here. The Ontario run began on July 23 and marked the first stadium shows of the tour, so it's possible the E Streeters were still playing it somewhat safe as they adjusted to the outdoor ambiance and vibe. Points deducted from Back Streets for the artwork: a generic red, white and blue motif, with flag stripes on the back. Someone give that art director a job, fast.



Live In Tempe 1980
(Palace 3CD)
VENUE: ASU Activity Center
CITY: Tempe, AZ
DATE: November 5, 1980
SOUND QUALITY: 9
PERFORMANCE: 9
PACKAGING: 6

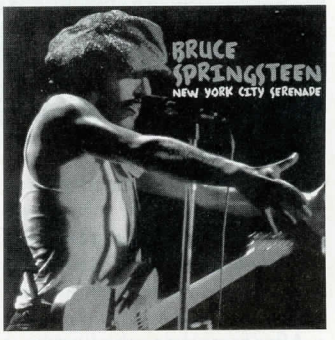
A remastered upgrade of the E. St. label's well-known *Heart & Soul*, a very good (if not totally glitch-free) board recording which has been out of print for a few years. This has more depth and "presence" than the E. St. edition, most likely due to the newest types of remastering software. Comparing both versions and noting the similarity of some minor edits and brief mid-song dropouts, it probably comes from the same source tape, albeit possibly a lower-generation dub. So while the term "upgrade" is used loosely here, there's no question that you'll appreciate this even if you already own the E. St. version. The Palace packaging is minimal at best, however, just color pics on front and rear tray panels, no booklet. Note that disc two of the initial pressing contained a manufacturer's flaw, with two-second gaps between tracks. Palace is reportedly making replacement discs to distribute to dealers.

Of course, as both a key historical artifact and a classic document of suspended-belief rock 'n' roll magic, *Live In Tempe 1980* is invaluable. Ronald Reagan had been elected President the day before this performance, and Springsteen would famously comment on that before catapulting full-tilt into a howling, incendiary "Badlands." The show also contains the bleak trilogy of "Stolen Car," "Wreck on the Highway" and "Point Blank," once described by this magazine as "the most depressing segment of any Springsteen show ever." But he didn't forget to rock, either. Sending the crowd out into the night after a marathon that married hope to despair and light to darkness, Bruce delivered nothing less than a sense of purpose and meaning.

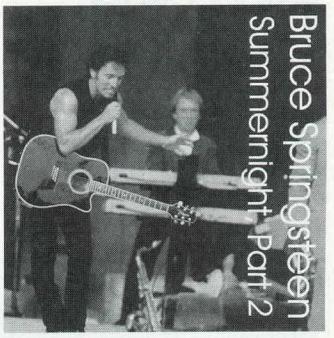
New York City Serenade
(Wild Card 2CD)
VENUE: Union College
CITY: Schenectady, NY
DATE: October 19, 1974
SOUND QUALITY: 8
PERFORMANCE: 8
PACKAGING: 7

The one-off cover of "Spanish Harlem" alone makes this a highly desirable concert to acquire. There's a vibrant delicacy afoot throughout the song that suggests the E Streeters loved playing it; especially noteworthy are Roy and Danny's piano-organ interplay, Suki Lahav's sweet violin and some spectral, almost angelic, backing vocals. Other highlights include a near-orchestral "Lost in the Flood" which segues gently into "She's the One," and a killer "Incident on 57th Street" giving Suki an outstanding showcase.

Piggham's previous *Spanish Harlem* title didn't correct the speed problems that plagued tapes of this show; now in steps



Wild Card with its properly sped-up edition. The tradeoff along the way appears to be a moderate loss in high end. The notes to Piggham's edition indicated that no noise reduction was employed in the transfer, so Wild Card may have simply opted to add noise reduction while correcting the speed. It's a remarkably fine audience recording: clear vocals, smooth sonic spectrum across all instruments, with virtually no crowd interference and only a couple of dropouts and slight muffling in places. Two bonus tracks not on the old Piggham version (from Trenton 11/19/74), of substantially lesser sound quality, round out the second disc.



Summernight, Part 2
(Piggham 2CD-R)
VENUE: Olympic Stadion
CITY: Stockholm, Sweden
DATE: July 3, 1988
SOUND QUALITY: 7
PERFORMANCE: 9
PACKAGING: 8

The first half of this *Tunnel of Love* show was famously broadcast worldwide from the Stockholm Stadion. A number of two-CD boots naturally resulted, including Q Sound's *Summernights* and Crystal Cat's *Summer Night*. However, the remainder of the concert was not aired, and the 35-song set turned out to be one of the longest ever, as well as one of the all-time best '88 rip-it-ups. Piggham has duly dug up an audience tape of the subsequent two hours, and reports of it being a "punchy and up-front" recording are for the most part accurate. Bruce's vocals in particular are clear; some occasional noise from the taper and surrounding fans are discernible but not distracting; only the low end suffers slightly from distortion. Highlights from *Part 2* include second-set opener "Paradise by the C," the Euro tour debut of "Downbound Train" followed by "Because the Night," and the unexpected appearance of "Quarter to Three" in the concert-closing rock 'n' soul revue.

Kent State Radio
(Smokey Joe, 2CD)
VENUE: Kent State University / KLOL-FM Studios
CITY: Kent, OH / Houston, TX
DATE: January 19, 1974 / March 8, 1974
SOUND QUALITY: 9.5
PERFORMANCE: 9-10
PACKAGING: 9

Kent State Radio upgrades not one but two '74 sets already deemed by *Backstreets*' Lynn Elder to be five-star classics, essential if

Continued page 36

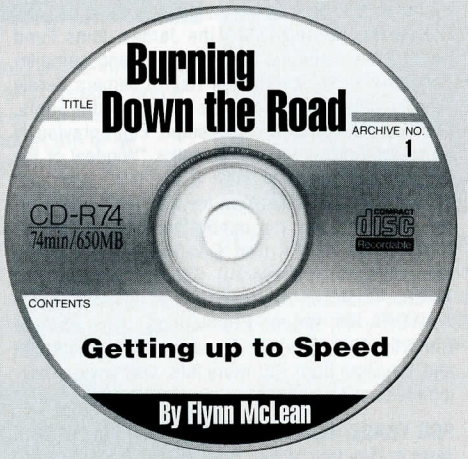
In the beginning, there was vinyl. And those moments of pure glee when you stumbled upon that independent record store or flea market stand that had an "import" title in their Springsteen section, for which you gladly plunked down your $70.

You thought you were the only one who felt this way about record in a white jacket with a paper insert (often a photocopy of a promotional picture) and a title like *Fire on the Fingertips* and *Piece de Resistence.* But in looking at the classified ads in *Backstreets* magazine, you realized there were others out there in search of live Springsteen. You responded to a few ads, and an exchange of letters and lists resulted in a trade of cassette copies of those scratchy vinyl records. Many found themselves not only with many of these tapes, but also a community of like-minded Springsteen fans, passionate about seeking out and hearing new recordings, no matter how bad they sounded. Trading partners became friends, and friends became traveling companions on the next tour.

In 1989, the first bootleg compact discs surfaced and the game changed tremendously. Early bootleg labels like Great Dane and Swingin' Pig were able to press their titles from very low generation tapes, sometimes even masters, and the sound quality was exquisite on many releases. Of course, there were downsides to this new age of bootlegging: each disc cost, on average, $25, so Great Dane's three-disc *Live in the Promised Land* (12/15/78) came to a whopping $75. Lax copyright laws in Europe resulted in new titles appearing at an incredible rate, and fans often took chances with their money, often not knowing how a disc sounded before sliding their cash across the counter. Fortunately, the Internet World wasn't far behind the Digital Age, and Springsteen fans had a new way to network and communicate. Reviews of new titles could be found on the net, to help with decisions about which CDs were worth the plunge. But while more and more material was in circulation, and Digital Audio Tape (DAT) was a revelation for those who could afford it, cassette trading had lost its luster.

The late '90s brought a development that truly changed live music collecting: the consumer compact disc recorder, or "burner." As with most technology, prices steadily dropped with time, and many fans found such burners to be easily within their budget. A decade after *Tunnel of Lust,* the first bootleg CD, surfaced, anyone with a personal computer could finally make their own compact disc recordables (CDRs) in their home—in fact, CDR burners are now considered standard in new computers. And in a positive twist, blank CDRs actually cost less than blank cassette tapes.

The first "wave" of CDR trading among fans was to upgrade their tape collection to have the titles released by regular bootleg labels, such as Crystal Cat, E. St. Records, and Great Dane. But there were people who wanted to create their own titles from their own tapes or circulating tapes that had been previously "unbooted." The 1999-2000 Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band reunion tour marked the beginning of a new age in live disc collecting. Tapers recorded shows onto DAT, transferred the recordings to a CDR without any loss in quality, and then gave copies to other fans, resulting in a rejuvenated trading community. More trading partners could be found in places like RMAS (the newsgroup rec.music.artists.springsteen), Greasy Lake (www.greasylake.org), and other message boards and e-mail lists. While many fans trade recorded discs for other recorded discs, plenty are willing to make copies of shows for nothing more than blank discs and



return postage—commonly referred to as "B&P"—for people new to CDR trading and/or without burners of their own.

The great demand for the more popular shows, such as the 8/11/99 Meadowlands show and the 9/24/99 "birthday show" in Philadelphia, warranted "trees" for distribution, where "branches" (those with burners), made copies for "leaves" (those without burners). Contacts were made, and they didn't vanish unseen in this world wide community. Much care was taken in putting these sets together, including the addition of bonus tracks and the creation of jewel case artwork, and some of these community efforts often rivaled the bootleg labels in both appearance and sound quality. Community pride grew incredibly strong, especially when some of these trees also asked for a donation to a particular fund or organization, such as the Parkinsons Disease Foundation and the September 11 relief efforts.

Since the end of the '99-2000 tour, fans have gone back to find "diamonds in the rough," old tapes that had been previously overlooked by the regular bootleg labels, and converted them to CDR. And just like the old days in the flea market or independent record store, the joy of discovering one of these gems is still just as fresh.

The late '90s also ushered in a new wave of digital music, as audio file formats were developed that drastically reduced file size with minimal loss to sound quality. The MP3 file format ignited a huge debate between music fans and record companies, once users were able to easily exchange the files through online services, such as Napster. Such files can be stored as the smaller MP3s, or easily burned onto a CDR that plays on CD players. One major advantage of MP3 files was evident on Springsteen's last tour, as unique songs, such as "Viva Las Vegas," were posted to MP3 servers or websites within days, allowing fans from all over the world to hear a tour debut. Napster's demise, however, left users scrambling to find an alternative. Multiple file-sharing services, though not as high-profile or user friendly as Napster, can still get the job done. Some websites maintain some Springsteen material, both live and studio outtakes, but it's often just a track or two per era. Complete shows have appeared on these sites, but they often quickly disappear. While many traders consider the compressed file format to be less than desirable, it is still a great way to share music without relying on the postal system.

Backstreets has long advocated tape-trading as a way to spread the music without spending the big bucks, as well as a way to meet and share with other fans from all over the world. With CDRs replacing tapes as the main trading format, fans are now collecting more than ever—and without any generation loss, thanks to the digital age. Fans and collectors who don't have two DAT decks can now trade and share recordings without the wow and flutter—even without leaving their computer or waiting a week for the postman.

This column marks the advent of a new "On Collecting" feature, to keep track of what's out there in the world of fan-made, non-"official" bootleg recordings. We'll still keep up with the official ones—bootleg labels have been responsible for some of the most compelling recordings that have surfaced over the past decade, and say what you will about price (let alone legality), many are clearly labors of love. But while bootlegs have been a boon to anyone looking to go beyond Springsteen's official catalog, trading circles have long enabled fans to fine-tune their collections with material that hasn't made it to mass production (collecting all the '78 shows, sound quality be damned; or getting a keepsake of the '92 show you saw with your then-first-date, now-husband).

That gets us up to speed. In the issues to come, this column will keep up with the latest and greatest files/tapes/CDRs making the rounds online and elsewhere. Recent highlights have been recordings from the 2001 holiday shows; a newly-surfaced, outstanding recording from a 1981 Landover, MD, show; and a few remastered recordings from the 1999-2000 tour. In the meantime, if collecting live material is up your alley, we encourage you to boot up, tune in, and burn on.

Flynn McLean has been collecting live Springsteen music since the Maxell XI-II days. He is the webmaster for www.theboots.net, and he can be reached at flynn@theboots.net.

CLASSIFIEDS

PERSONALS

SPECIAL HOLIDAY GREETINGS TO MY WONDERFUL family and thanks for your recent support. I'm just around the corner to the light of day.... Baltimore Jack.

LIKE-MINDED MUSICIANS SOUGHT FOR BRUCE tribute band in San Francisco area. If you ever wanted to be in a kick-ass band that played nothing but Bruce covers, call or email me. Serious inquiries only, no flakes please. Kevin: (650) 343-4322 or kevin413@aol.com.

FANS AND FRIENDS OF ELLIOTT MURPHY ARE paying tribute to the singer/songwriter on a new (non-profit making) CD, *Lookin' for a Hero.* More information about the CD and Elliott Murphy himself on the website, www.lookinforahero.com

STEVE VANSAK WITH THE JOE ROBERTS BAND— the new CD, *A Different Road,* available now!! www.cdbaby.com/stevevansak or amazon.com

WANTED

ALTERNATIVE CHRISTMAS SONGS WANTED! FOR an eclectic holiday compilation to benefit hospice (2002 release). Original and standard Christmas tunes accepted by bands of all levels of acclaim, whether new or old, actively touring or not. Submission deadline is May 30, 2002. CD, vinyl or cassette should be sent to: Volunteer Records c/o C.H.C.I., 187 Milburn Ave., Milburn, NJ 07041. Please include artist and song history, if available.

SEEKING RECORDING OF THE 9/1/85 MEADOW- lands concert, for very sentimental reasons. Please contact Kathy at kathy.bowden@govworks.com.

IN SEARCH OF SPRINGSTEEN HALL OF FAME induction, VH1. Desperate. mbarber@mjminc.com.

MY BRUCE VIDEOS, YOUR AUDIO. SEND FOR LIST. Michelle Leonard, PO Box 13, South Amboy, NJ 08879.

FOR SALE

JERSEY JAMS, JERSEY CARES, A CHARITABLE tribute to the New Jersey families of Sept. 11, will be released March 11 by the Jersey Jams Fund (www.jerseyjamsfund.org). The 14-song compilation features Rock and Roll Hall of Famers Bernie Worrell and Levon Helm, as well as John Eddie, Glen Burtnik and Robert Randolph. Eight previously unreleased songs include Burtnik's "Window of the World," and Bernie Worrell & the WOO Warriors' "Thank Ya." All profits from the disc and a companion concert series throughout New Jersey will be distributed by Bergen County's United Way (www.bergenunitedway.org). Sponsors include Disc Makers, Comcast, *Backstreets, The Aquarian Weekly,* WDHA-FM, Atomic Productions, Black Potatoe Records, SRA Studios, Randex Communications and The Darn Barn. For more info, visit www.jerseyjamsfund.org.

FOR TRADE: BLACK AND GOLD BASEBALL-STYLE *Born to Run* tour jacket. BrianH@mountaineers.org, make offer.

RATES

CLASSIFIED RATES: RATES ARE $1 A WORD with 10 words or $10 minimum for all commercial ads, trades, wants, for sales, or tape trades. Ads that have no commercial intent (pen pals, messages and the like) are 50 cents a word, 10 word minimum. No ads selling bootleg or unauthorized materials will be accepted. Write for display advertising rates. *Backstreets* assumes no responsibility for any advertising in the magazine. Please write our Consumer Services Dept. if you have any problems with an advertiser. Send all ads to *Backstreets* Classifieds, PO Box 11079, Washington DC 20008, USA; fax (202) 232-2259; or e-mail orders@backstreets.com.

BOSS IN THE U.S.A. - TONS OF RARE BRUCE video, CDs, and coming soon—DVDs! Also have rare posters, autographs, tour jackets, etc. SASE for list: TV, PO Box 1456, Pacific Palisades, CA 90272.

RARE, ORIGINAL LIVE CDS/PHOTOS. CONTACT blancos@uol.com.br

RIAA PLATINUM AWARDS FOR SALE OR TRADE *(Greetings, Human Touch, Lucky Town).* Contact Daniele Casati at avalonitalia@tin.it, or Via Emilia 268,Voghera Pavia 27058, ITALY.

MUSIC LASERS, PROMO CDS, SIGNED GUITARS, memorabilia, records, books, rare concert tickets. Call for catalog: Bob, (201) 236-9107. Website: www.MusicAndVideo.com.

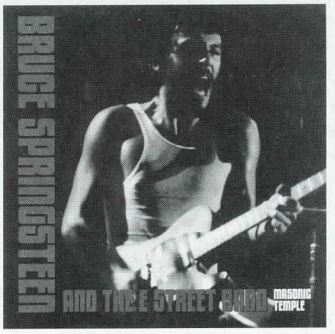
BACKSTREET RECORDS—COLLECT THE BOSS! For Bruce CDs, vinyl, mags, memorabilia, and more, check out our online catalog at backstreets.com.

Continued from page 34

you don't already own them. Smokey Joe takes a fresh look at the Kent State show previously available as Great Dane's '89 title *You Mean so Much to Me,* and the KLOL-FM broadcast that Whoopy Cat issued in '94 as *The Lost Radio Show* (it was subsequently copied by Kiss The Stone). As the Great Dane title originally came as a CD + CD single set, the final two songs now appear at the start of disc two. This means that for space purposes, the 18-minute interview conducted by KLOR's Ed Beauchamp that filled out *The Lost Radio Show* has been excised for the Smokey Joe edition. (And for some reason Smokey Joe has rechristened KLOL as KLOR).

Soundwise, it's hard to detect much difference between the KLOL/KLORs, although the newly remastered Kent State material—still seemingly a mono soundboard, despite Smokey Joe's titular suggestion—now displays less hiss and a more full-bodied presence. (Elder noted previously that it had an uneven mix.) There was a rumored final encore at Kent State of "For You" which has never surfaced, by the way. The set's presentation is quite nice, the four-panel booklet artfully designed with an array of black and white period photos.

Since Elder has already recommended the performances themselves, let it suffice to say that as a couple of Vini Lopez/David Sancious (pre-Miami Steve) era shows, they are exemplary. The Kent State show indeed rates a ten, including an 11-minute "Blinded by the Light" and the premiere of "Incident on 57th Street"; KLOL included a startlingly different arrangement of "The Fever" well as some intimate band chatter. Jazzy, poetic, tight-but-loose, earnest and fun all the way around.



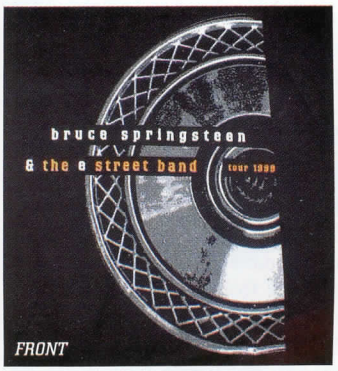
Masonic Temple
(Wild Card, 2CD)
Venue: Masonic Temple Auditorium
City: Detroit, MI
Date: February 15, 1977
Sound Quality: 6-7
Performance: 8
Packaging: 7

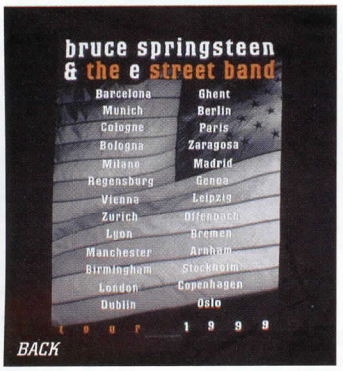
The latest entry in the Chicken Scratch tour sweepstakes may seem to some collectors a curious choice to press up on disc, setwise; the concert was a relatively short one, with both "Growin' Up" and "Raise Your Hand" getting the axe. Performance-wise, however, it's a good selection. The band, Memphis Horns in tow, is in fine form. This show was the only date of the '77 tour that featured "Detroit Medley." Instead of "Night" as the concert opener they precede it with a sultry "Something in the Night." "Rendezvous" and "It's My Life" are other early highlights. Right after a stand-out "Jungleland," a fadeout and splice are audible, and from that point on the sound deteriorates somewhat, with more tape saturation distortion and a marked tinny quality. Photos and art design are tasteful, if minimal; Wild Card tends to offer bare-bones presentations but balances that by specializing in deep-archival sets.

Backstreets *does not endorse the illegal sale of bootleg recordings, nor can we advise as to their legality or how they may be obtained.*

OFFICIAL CONCERT WEAR

All are officially licensed, 100% pure (and 100% cotton) Springsteen shirts, sold on tour.





EURO TOUR '99 HUBCAP T-SHIRT

New in stock, and at a low low price! Official shirt sold on the first leg of the '99-2000 tour. Hubcap design on front of black shirt, reads "Bruce Springsteen & the E Street Band, Tour 1999." Back of shirt lists all European tour stops, from Barcelona to Oslo, printed on top of an American flag. 100% pre-shrunk cotton, **XL only**. A great shirt at a great price. **$15** each, or **two for $22**!

TOM JOAD LONG-SLEEVE DENIM SHIRT

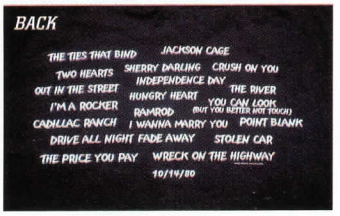
Sturdy, light-blue denim button-down work shirt with a subtle design over the front pocket: interlocking gears that read "Bruce Springsteen" embroidered in four colors. **XL only,** runs big. Just a few left! **$40**

TOM JOAD LONG-SLEEVE HENLEY SHIRT

Long out of stock, it's back! Long-sleeve tour shirts are often hard to come by, and this is one of the greats. A brown "Henley"-style shirt, with three buttons at the top. "Bruce Springsteen: Ghost of Tom Joad" embroidery on the chest. Official *Joad* tour shirt, **XL only,** pre-shrunk 100% cotton. **$35**

DARKNESS T-SHIRT

Black, with the *Darkness* album cover in color on the front, and song titles on the back in tan and gray. As sold on the 1999-2000 Tour. L or XL. **$20**, or **2 for $30**!



THE RIVER T-SHIRT

Black, with the *River* album cover on the front, and song titles on the back in blue and gray. As sold on the 1999-2000 Tour. L or XL. **$20**, or **2 for $30**!

TRACKS T-SHIRT

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nam is just one example—in its desire to recast itself as a force of "infinite justice" out in the world. And Springsteen was certainly asking us to question such events then, just as I hope he is now.

Would it be too much in this climate of fear, apprehension and ongoing exploitation to expect mainstream dissident voices like Springsteen to speak out against dangerous acts of revenge, while at the same time grieving for the lost of September 11? If that might trigger what he would see as too much negative feedback from angry Americans, what would that say about the poor health of free speech both in the U.S.A. and across the "free world" right now?

Yours in peace and justice,

Robbie Madden
London, England

IN THESE WATERS

Dear Editor:

October 19, 2001

You don't know me, and we will probably never meet. But I feel like I should write this letter to you guys at *Backstreets.* My name is Paul, and I'm a New York City Police Officer and I have been down to Ground Zero many times. The sight is an awful one, and it just breaks your heart everytime you're there. The news media coverage doesn't seem to hit you like actually being there does. The work is long right now—14-hour days—but how could you complain after this disaster. Well, the other day I arrived home to find my issue of *Backstreets* waiting for me. And let me tell you, it brought comfort to me to see the issue and to read "Souls of the Departed." Being an NYPD officer, it gives me great pleasure to see everyone giving their support. Sometimes the most uplifting thing is when someone on the street comes up and says thank you! I've always found comfort and security in Springsteen's music. I know a lot of people bad-mouthed him for "41 Shots," but I thought the song was brilliant. I never thought it was a song against the police. I often listen to "My City of Ruin" when I'm travelling into work for the inspiration and as a tribute to our fallen heroes.

Well, I just wanted to tell you guys, thanks—without people like you and your wonderful readers, New York would have had a hard time making it through. The support emotionally, physically, and financially is greatly appreciated. Maybe one day I will meet Bruce and thank him! Well, keep up the excellent work, and you have a member for life. Thanks, and Come on, Rise up!

Paul
New York, NY

Deliver Me From Nowhere

How to Make It Talk

Every now and then Springsteen hits a note so evocative, I wonder if one of the few times he was paying attention back in school was the day his class studied Sergey Prokofiev's *Peter and the Wolf*. You remember the 1934 children's symphony about an adventurous Russian kid trying to bag himself a wolf. A narrator guides the listener, but Prokofiev composed a score so picturesque that the characters live in the music as much as the words. The string section represents Peter, while his grandfather is played by the bassoon, the wolf by the French horn, and so on.

Springsteen's greatest talent is prescient storytelling in the linguistic sense. There are times, however, when the music he writes not only lays an appropriate foundation for his story, but actually injects so much life that it tells the story itself, even without the lyrics.

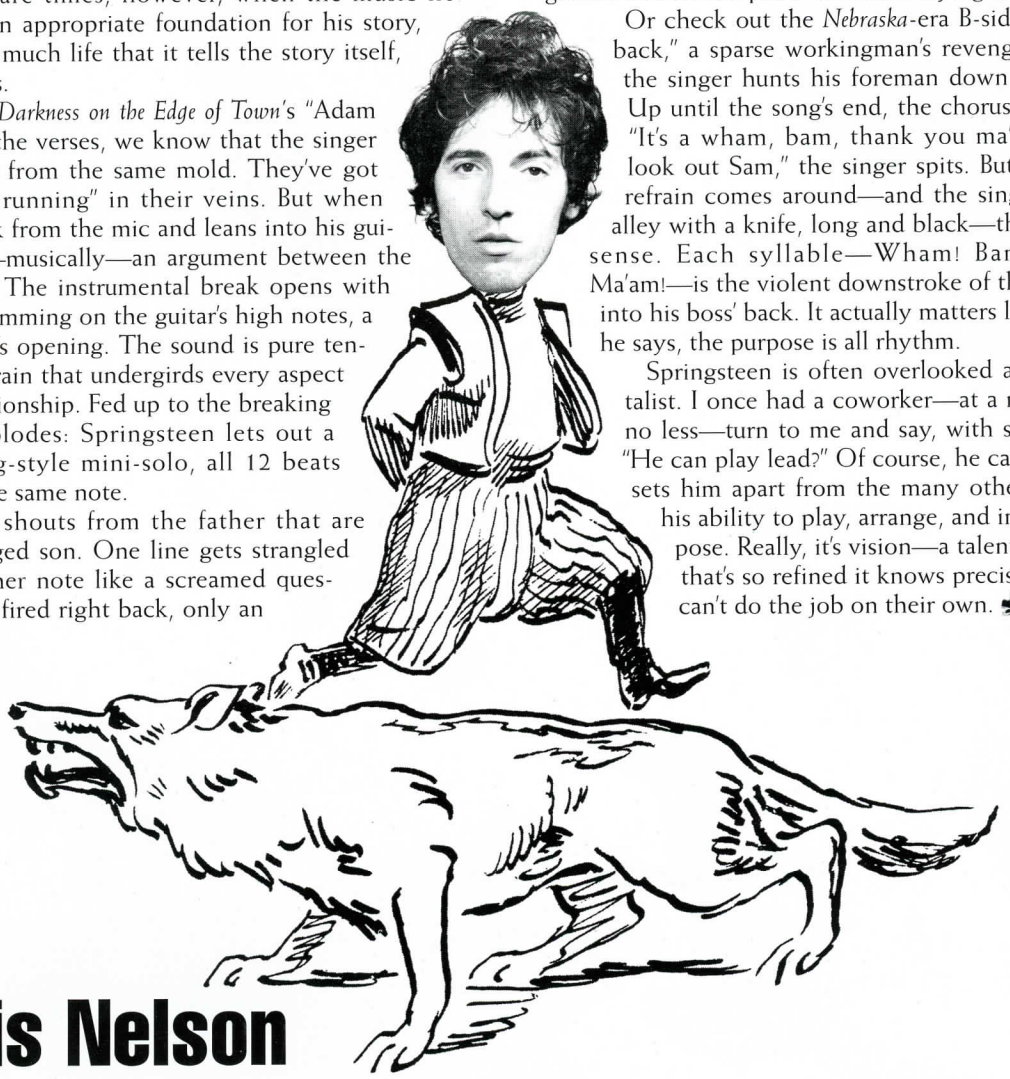
Take, for instance, *Darkness on the Edge of Town*'s "Adam Raised a Cain." From the verses, we know that the singer and his father are cut from the same mold. They've got the same "hot blood running" in their veins. But when Springsteen steps back from the mic and leans into his guitar we actually hear—musically—an argument between the singer and his father. The instrumental break opens with fast mandolin-like strumming on the guitar's high notes, a repetition of the song's opening. The sound is pure tension, recreating the strain that undergirds every aspect of this father-son relationship. Fed up to the breaking point, the father explodes: Springsteen lets out a relentless Neil Young-style mini-solo, all 12 beats hammering away at the same note.

He then pulls out shouts from the father that are answered by his enraged son. One line gets strangled out, ending on a higher note like a screamed question. The same line is fired right back, only an octave higher. Springsteen revisits the scene lyrically in *The River*'s "Independence Day" when he sighs, "I guess that we were just too much of the same kind." The father and son in "Adam Raised a Cain"'s instrumental break are shouting nearly identical emotions and frustrations, but neither can hear the other one as he's enveloped in his own rage.

The visual elements here are beautifully drawn-out, but you can find other instances scattered across Springsteen's songbook. Ernest "Boom" Carter's steady thumping kick drum on the intro to "Born to Run" is an accelerator gunning at a stop light. When he hits that snare roll 14 seconds in, you know the light's turned green and there's a patch of rubber laying on the street.

Or check out the *Nebraska*-era B-side "The Big Payback," a sparse workingman's revenge tale in which the singer hunts his foreman down in a dark alley. Up until the song's end, the chorus is largely filler: "It's a wham, bam, thank you ma'am, Goddamn, look out Sam," the singer spits. But when the final refrain comes around—and the singer waits in the alley with a knife, long and black—the lines all make sense. Each syllable—Wham! Bam! Thank You Ma'am!—is the violent downstroke of the knife hacking into his boss' back. It actually matters little what words he says, the purpose is all rhythm.

Springsteen is often overlooked as an instrumentalist. I once had a coworker—at a music magazine, no less—turn to me and say, with sincere curiosity, "He can play lead?" Of course, he can play. But what sets him apart from the many other gunslingers is his ability to play, arrange, and instruct with purpose. Really, it's vision—a talent for storytelling that's so refined it knows precisely when words can't do the job on their own.



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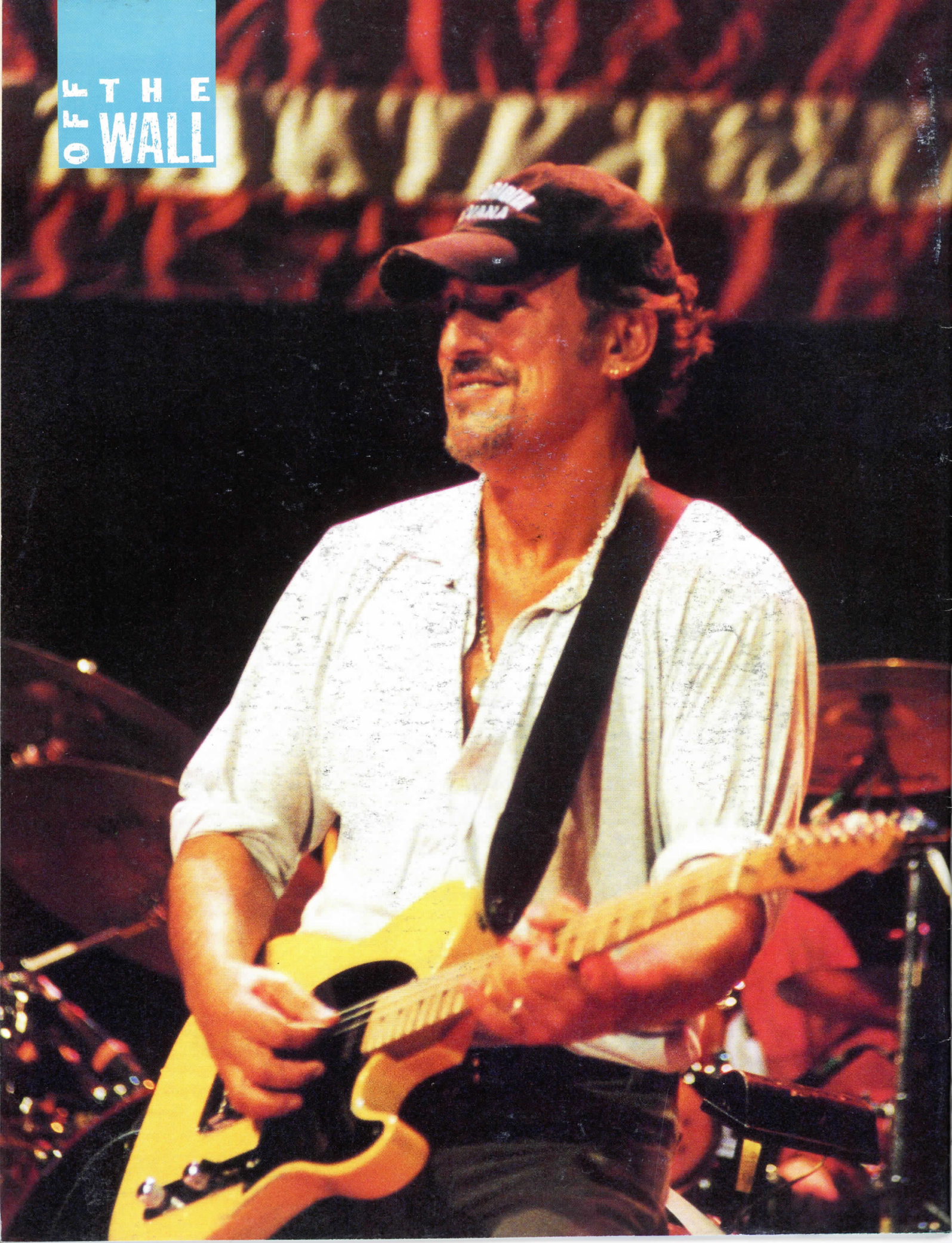
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